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ABSTRACT

This monograph is based on a conference on bilingual education held by the Center for Equal Opportunity (CEO) in September, 1995 in Washington, D.C. CEO made repeated attempts to secure speakers representing the pro-bilingual education viewpoint; the paper by Portes and Schauffler represents this view. Papers presented include: "Introduction: One Nation, One Common Language" (Linda Chavez); "Bilingual Education and the Role of Government in Preserving Our Common Language" (Toby Roth); "Is Bilingual Education an Effective Educational Tool? (Christine Rossell); "What Bilingual Education Research Tells Us" (Keith Baker); "The Politics of Bilingual Education Revisited" (Rosalie Pedalino Porter); "Realizing Democratic Ideals with Bilingual Education" (Irma N. Guadarrama); "Language and the Second Generation: Bilingualism Yesterday and Today" (Alejandro Portes and Richard Schauffler); "Educating California's Immigrant Children" (Wayne A. Cornelius); "Breaking the Bilingual Lobby's Stranglehold" (Sally Peterson); "Parental Choice in Burbank, California" (Lila Ramirez); "Bilingual Education Alternatives" (Patricia Whitelaw-Hill); "Bilingual Education in the Classroom" (Suzanne Guerrero); and "One Parent's Story" (Miguel Alvarado). An appendix offers details on a pending lawsuit concerning bilingual education, and a compiled index of bilingual education statistics is included that was assembled and graphed by Jorge Amselle. (NAV)

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The Failure of Bilingual Education

Introduction by Linda Chavez
Edited by Jorge Amselle

Center for Equal Opportunity

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Preface

This monograph is based on a conference on bilingual education held by the Center for Equal Opportunity on September 18, 1995, on Capitol Hill. The following contributors spoke at the conference: Linda Chavez, Rep. Toby Roth (R-Wis.), Lila Ramirez, Suzanne Guerrero, Sally Peterson, Patricia Whitelaw-Hill, Miguel Alvarado, Irma Guadarrama, Christine Rossell, and Rosalie Porter.

CEO made repeated attempts to secure speakers representing the pro-bilingual education viewpoint for the conference. Only the Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) organization was of any assistance in this matter, referring us to Professor Guadarrama. Not surprisingly, the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), and Congressional supporters of bilingual education sponsored their own conference on Capitol Hill on the same day as the Center's.

Professor Alejandro Portes could not attend our conference, but submitted an article he co-wrote with Richard Schauffler. Portes' research found that immigrant children in south Florida are learning English. It should be noted, however, that bilingual education in Florida is far more English-intensive than in other parts of the country.

As of this writing, the New York parents' lawsuit described in the appendix and elsewhere has been dismissed and is on appeal.

Introduction: One Nation, One Common Language

By Linda Chavez

Luis Granados was a bright 5-year-old who could read simple English before he entered kindergarten in Sun Valley, Calif. But soon after the school year began, his mother was told that he couldn't keep up. Yolanda Granados was bewildered. "He knows his alphabet," she assured the teacher.

"You don't understand," the teacher explained. "The use of both Spanish and English in the classroom is confusing him."

Yolanda Granados was born in Mexico but speaks excellent English. Simply because Spanish is sometimes spoken in her household, however, the school district—without consulting her—put her son in bilingual classes. "I sent Luis to school to learn *English*," she declares.

When she tried to put her boy into regular classes, she was given the runaround. "Every time I went to the school," she says, "the principal gave me some excuse." Finally, Granados figured out a way to get around the principal, who has since left the school.

Each school year, she had to meet with Luis' teachers to say she wanted her son taught solely in English. They cooperated with her, but Luis was still officially classified as a bilingual student until he entered the sixth grade.

Unfortunately, the Granados family's experience has become common around the country. When bilingual education was being considered

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by Congress, it had a limited mission: to teach children of Mexican descent in Spanish while they learned English. Instead it has become an expensive behemoth, often with a far-reaching political agenda: to promote Spanish among Hispanic children, regardless of whether they speak English, regardless of their parents' wishes and even without their knowledge. For instance:

■ In New Jersey last year, Hispanic children were being assigned to Spanish-speaking classrooms, the result of a state law that mandated bilingual instruction. Angry parents demanded freedom of choice. But when a bill to end the mandate was introduced in the Legislature, a group of 50 bilingual advocates testified against it at a state board of education meeting.

"Why would we require parents unfamiliar with our educational system to make such a monumental decision when we are trained to make those decisions?" asked Joseph Ramos, then co-chairman of the North Jersey Bilingual Council.

■ The Los Angeles Unified School District educates some 265,000 Spanish-speaking children, more than any other in the nation. It advises teachers, in the words of the district's *Bilingual Methodology Study Guide*, "not to encourage minority parents to switch to English in the home, but to encourage them to strongly promote development of the primary language." Incredibly, the guide also declares that "excessive use of English in bilingual classrooms tends to lower students' achievement in English."

■ In Denver, 2,500 students from countries such as Russia and Vietnam learn grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in ESL (English as a Second Language). An English "immersion" program, ESL is the principal alternative to bilingual education. Within a few months, most ESL kids are taking mathematics, science, and social studies classes in English.

But the 11,000 Hispanic children in Denver public schools don't have the choice to participate in ESL full time. Instead, for their first few years they are taught most of the day in Spanish and are introduced only gradually to English. Jo Thomas, head of the bilingual/ESL education program for the Denver public schools, estimates these kids will ultimately spend on average five to seven years in its bilingual program.

Activist Takeover. Bilingual education began in the late 1960s as a small, $7.5-million federal program for Mexican-American children, half of whom could not speak English when they entered first grade. The idea was to teach them in Spanish for a short period, until they got up to speed in their new language.

Sen. Ralph Yarborough (D-Tex.), a leading sponsor of the first federal bilingual law in 1968, explained that its intent was "to make children fully literate in English." Yarborough assured Congress that the purpose was "not to make the mother tongue dominant."

Unfortunately, bilingual-education policy soon fell under the sway of political activists demanding recognition of the "group rights" of cultural and linguistic minorities. By the late 1970s the federal civil-rights office was insisting that school districts offer bilingual education to Hispanic and other "language minority" students or face a cutoff of federal funds.

Most states followed suit, adopting bilingual mandates either by law or by bureaucratic edict. The result is that, nationally, most first-grade students from Spanish-speaking homes are taught to read and write in Spanish.

The purpose in many cases is no longer to bring immigrant children into the mainstream of American life. Some advocates see bilingual education as the first step in a radical transformation of the United States into a nation without one common language or fixed borders.

Spanish "should no longer be regarded as a 'foreign' language," according to Josué González, director of bilingual education in the Carter Administration and now a professor at Columbia University Teachers College. Instead, he writes in *Reinventing Urban Education*, Spanish should be "a second national language."

Others have even more extreme views. At the February 1995 annual conference of the National Association for Bilingual Education (a leading lobbying group for supporters of bilingual education) in Phoenix, several speakers challenged the idea of U.S. sovereignty and promoted the notion that the Southwest and northern Mexico form one cultural region, which they dub *La Frontera*.

Eugene García, head of bilingual education at the U.S. Department of Education, declared to thunderous applause that "the border for many is

nonexistent. For me, for intellectual reasons, that border *shall* be nonexistent." His statement might surprise President Clinton, who appointed García and has vowed to beef up border protection to stem the flow of illegal aliens into the United States.

"I Was Furious." Bilingual education has grown tremendously from its modest start. Currently, some 2.4 million children are eligible for bilingual or ESL classes, with bilingual education alone costing over $5.5 billion. New York City, for instance, spends $400 million annually on its 147,500 bilingual students—$2,712 per pupil.

A great deal of this money is being wasted. "We don't even speak Spanish at home," says Miguel Alvarado of Sun Valley, Calif., yet his 8-year-old daughter, Emily, was put in a bilingual class. Alvarado concludes that this was done simply because he is bilingual.

When my son Pablo entered school in the District of Columbia, I received a letter notifying me that he would be placed in a bilingual program—even though Pablo didn't speak a word of Spanish, since I grew up not speaking it either. (My family has lived in what is now New Mexico since 1609.) I was able to decline the program without much trouble, but other Hispanic parents aren't always so fortunate.

When Rita Montero's son, Camilo, grew bored by the slow academic pace of his first-grade bilingual class in Denver, she requested a transfer. "The kids were doing work way below the regular grade level," says Montero. "I was furious." Officials argued they were under court order to place him in a bilingual class.

In fact, she was entitled to sign a waiver, but no one she met at school informed her of this. Ultimately she enrolled Camilo in a magnet school across town. Says Montero, "Only through determination and anger did I get my son in the classroom where he belonged." Most parents—especially immigrants—aren't so lucky. They're intimidated by the system, and their kids are stuck.

Most school districts with large Hispanic populations require parents with Spanish surnames to fill out a "home-language survey." If parents report that Spanish is used in the home, even occasionally, the school may place the child in bilingual classes. Unbeknownst to the parents, a Spanish-speaking grandparent living with the family may be enough to

trigger placement, even if the grandchild speaks little or no Spanish.

Though parents are supposed to be able to opt out, bureaucrats have a vested interest in discouraging them, since the school will lose government funds. In some districts, funding for bilingual education exceeds that of mainstream classes by 20 percent or more. New York state, for example, doesn't allow Hispanic students to exit the bilingual program until they score above the 40th percentile on a standardized English test.

"There is a Catch-22, operating here," says Christine Rossell, a professor of political science at Boston University. She explains that such testing guarantees enrollment in the program, for "by definition, 40 percent of all students who take any standardized test will score at or below the 40th percentile."

Family's Business. Bilingual programs are also wasted on children who do need help learning English. Studies often confirm what common sense would tell you: The less time you spend speaking a new language, the more slowly you'll learn it.

In 1994 bilingual and ESL programs in New York City were compared. Results: 92 percent of Korean, 87 percent of Russian, and 83 percent of Chinese children who started intensive ESL classes in kindergarten had made it into mainstream classes in three years or less. Of the Hispanic students in bilingual classes, only half made it to mainstream classes within three years. "How can anyone learn English in school when they speak Spanish four hours a day?" asks Gail Fiber, an elementary school teacher in Southern California. "In more than seven years' experience with bilingual education, I've never seen it done successfully."

Rosalie Pedalino Porter, former director of bilingual education in Newton, Mass., and now with the Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development, reached a similar conclusion. "I felt that I was deliberately holding back the learning of English," she writes in her eloquent critique, *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education.*

Native-language instruction is not even necessary to academic performance, according to Boston University's Rossell. "Ninety-one percent of scientifically valid studies show bilingual education to be no better—or actually worse—than doing nothing." In other words, students who are allowed to sink or swim in all-English classes are actually better off than

bilingual students.

The overwhelming majority of immigrants believe that it is a family's duty—not the school's—to help children maintain the native language. "If parents had an option," says Lila Ramirez, vice president of the Burbank, Calif., Human Relations Council, "they'd prefer all-English to all-Spanish." When a U.S. Department of Education survey asked Mexican and Cuban parents what they wanted, four-fifths declared their opposition to teaching children in their native language if it meant less time devoted to English.

Sense of Unity. It's time for federal and state legislators to overhaul this misbegotten program. The best policy for children—and for the country—is to teach English to immigrant children as quickly as possible. American-born Hispanics, who now make up more than half of all bilingual students, should be taught in English.

Bilingual education probably would end swiftly if more people knew about the November 1994 meeting of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education, in Austin. Both Mexican and U.S. flags adorned the stage at this gathering, and the attendees—mainly Texas teachers and administrators—stood as the national anthems of both countries were sung.

At least one educator present found the episode dismaying. "I stood, out of respect, when the Mexican anthem was played," says Odilia Leal, bilingual coordinator for the Temple Independent School District. "But I think we should just sing the U.S. anthem. My father, who was born in Mexico, taught me that the United States, not Mexico, is my country."

With 20 million immigrants now living in our country, it's more important than ever to teach newcomers to think of themselves as Americans if we hope to remain one people, not simply a conglomeration of different groups. And one of the most effective ways of forging that sense of unity is through a common language.

Bilingual Education and the Role of Government in Preserving Our Common Language

By Rep. Toby Roth

Just how important is today's discussion on bilingual education? A quick look at some startling facts will tell us all we need to know. Today, 32 million Americans don't speak English. In just five years, that number will rise to 40 million. To put that figure into perspective, English is a foreign language for one in seven Americans. For most of our nation's history, America gave the children of immigrants a precious gift—an education in the English language. As each new wave of immigrants arrived on these shores, our public school system taught their sons and daughters English, so they could claim their American dream.

What are we doing for these new Americans today? Instead of giving them a first-rate education in English, our bilingual education programs are consigning an entire generation of new Americans—unable to speak, understand, and use English effectively—to a second-class future.

This tragedy has human faces. Let me tell you about two people's experiences, which illustrate the impact of our failed bilingual education programs. I've never heard the problems with bilingual education so succinctly or poignantly put than in the words of Ernesto Ortiz, a foreman on a south Texas ranch who said: "My children learn Spanish in school so they can become busboys and waiters. I teach them English at home so they can become doctors and lawyers." Ortiz understands that English is

the language of opportunity in this country. He understands that denying his children a good education in English will doom them—doom them to a limited, as opposed to limitless future.

Bilga Abramova also understands this simple truth. She is a 35-year-old Russian refugee who has entered a church lottery three times in an attempt to win one of 50 coveted spaces in a free, intensive English class offered by her local parish. Her pleas in Russian speak volumes about the plight of all too many immigrants: "I need to win," she said. "Without English, I cannot begin a new life." The ultimate paradox about our commitment to bilingual education in this county is that Bilga Abramova and others like her all across the country sit on waiting lists for intensive English classes while we spend $8 billion a year teaching children in their native language.

I've made no secret about my belief that bilingual education programs keep children from learning English quickly. A great many people are starting to see things the same way. This session of Congress has seen the most exciting and comprehensive reappraisal of bilingual education programs since their inception in 1968. Under this new scrutiny, these programs have been found wanting.

In fact, you would be hard-pressed to find another issue that has generated such a diverse coalition of critics. Opponents of bilingual education now come from all points of the political spectrum. In the last six months, groups ranging from the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars to the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, and *The New Republic* have all called for the elimination of bilingual education. You've heard from parents like Ernesto Ortiz and how they feel about bilingual education. Even teachers oppose these programs. A recent survey of 1,000 elementary and secondary teachers found that 64 percent of them disapproved of bilingual education programs and favored intensive English instruction instead.

The people and the pundits have spoken, and now the politicians are starting to listen. This year, the House Budget Committee recommended in its budget resolution that we eliminate bilingual education completely. The rescission bill just signed into law by the president contained almost $40 million in cuts in bilingual education programs. Finally,

the House of Representatives just passed the Education Appropriations bill that cut bilingual education funding in half for Fiscal Year 1996.

In the face of this mounting and widespread criticism, even long-time defenders of these programs are starting to change their tune. The California Board of Education approved a new policy in October of 1995 in which it abandoned its preference for bilingual education programs. I think this is the first gentle breeze before the coming of the storm. I believe that this debate, in its broadest context, has the potential to become one of the defining issues of the upcoming presidential campaign. By some accounts, it already has. Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich devoted an entire chapter of his book, *To Renew America*, to the failings of bilingual education and the importance of using our educational system to reinforce our common language, English.

In September of 1995, Sen. Robert Dole brought this issue to center stage with his high-profile denunciation of multilingual education. Since then, bilingual education has emerged as a hot-button issue on talk radio, commentary shows, and in newspaper editorials. In October of 1995, for the first time in 30 years, Congress held hearings on this issue. The Education and Economic Opportunities Committee heard testimony on my bill, the Declaration of Official Language Act, from a panel of experts.

This year marks the 27th year of bilingual education programs. For more and more people, that is 27 years too long. I would venture a guess that bilingual education may not last another 27 months, let alone another 27 years. No matter what your opinion of bilingual education, be it positive or negative, almost everyone would agree that it's time to take a fresh look at this problem. Bilingual education has had 27 years and billions of dollars to prove that it accomplished what it said it would do in 1968: teach children English quickly and effectively.

Too many people lose sight of the fact that the real issue here is how to help children and newcomers who don't know English and who need to assimilate. I believe that we must go back to the teaching method that had proven successful for over two centuries in generation after generation of new Americans: immersion. I know my grandparents from Odessa, Ukraine, learned English that way. Maybe many of your parents

and grandparents learned English that way too. My grandmother learned English perfectly without the help of bilingual education. Why do we assume that today's new Americans can't learn as quickly or as well?

People might say the difference today is that we no longer want immigrants to lose their native languages or their culture, that we have a responsibility to nurture those skills and that cultural heritage. We do have that responsibility—individually. All of us have a personal duty to maintain our heritage and preserve our culture. But we also have a civic duty to learn and become fluent in the language of the land, so we can participate to the fullest extent possible in American society.

We need to share a common language so our diverse people can share ideas, share experiences, forge common ideals. It should not be up to the government to preserve an individual's heritage and culture; that's personal responsibility. Rather, it is the government's duty to maintain and preserve a common language with which its citizens can communicate and interact. Just as one of a country's obligations is to provide a common currency to facilitate trade and commerce, a nation must also support and preserve a common language. Bilingual education, with its insistence on maintaining people's native languages at the expense of our common language, violates the basic tenet of nation-building.

We must not lose sight of the fact that this is not just an abstract public policy issue; bilingual education and our national language policies have real-world consequences. When our policies fail, the failures have names and faces attached to them. When our policies serve to divide rather than unite us, the rips appear in the very fabric of the American nation. This is no issue to be debated dispassionately by policy makers. It needs to be discussed and dissected by parents and teachers as well as experts and legislators. This is an issue that can affect the very future of new Americans and America itself.

The Research on Bilingual Education

Is Bilingual Education an Effective Educational Tool?

by Christine Rossell

Bilingual education has been a controversial issue throughout the United States since its inception in the mid-1960s. Its most common form is called transitional bilingual education (TBE). In transitional bilingual education, the student is taught to read and write in the native tongue, with subject matter also taught in the native tongue. The second language (English) is initially taught for only a small portion of the day. As the child progresses in English, the amount of instructional time in the native tongue is reduced and English increased, until the student is proficient enough in English to join the regular classroom.

At the heart of the controversy over this pedagogical technique are three questions: (1) Should limited-English-proficient (LEP) children receive, because of their language barrier, special, self-contained instruction that keeps them out of the regular classroom? (2) Should LEP children be taught to read and write in their native tongue? (3) Should time be taken out of the regular instructional day to teach LEP children about the culture of their ancestors' countries? Although the public may disagree about the answers to these questions, federal and state policy makers have, since 1968, come down squarely on the affirmative side. Federal and state governments have provided millions of dollars to fund programs that teach LEP children in their native tongue and culture.

It is thus important to know whether TBE is the best method for teaching LEP children. In order to assess the educational effectiveness of

transitional bilingual education, however, we must compare it to other educational programs for LEP children. There are four basic alternatives for instructing LEP children. The first of these is *submersion* or "sink-or-swim." In this model, the LEP child is placed in a regular English classroom with English monolingual children and given no more special help than any child with educational problems.

A second technique is *English as a Second Language* (ESL) instruction, which consists of regular classroom instruction for most of the day combined with a special pull-out program of English language instruction for one or two periods a day, or in some districts two or three periods a week, and participation in the regular classroom for the rest of the time.

A third instructional technique is *structured immersion*, where instruction is in the language being learned (in this country, English) in a self-contained classroom of LEP children. The second language used in these programs is always geared to the children's language proficiency at each stage so that it is comprehensible, and the student thus learns the second language and subject matter content simultaneously.

The fourth instructional technique, *transitional bilingual education* (TBE), is described above. The rationale underlying TBE differs depending on the age of the child. For very young children, it is that learning to read in the native tongue first is a necessary condition for optimal reading ability in the second language. For all children, it is argued that learning a second language takes time, and children should not lose ground in other subjects particularly math, during that time period.

The majority of elementary school programs have as their goal exiting a student after three years. But these programs also allow students to stay in the program longer than three years if they are judged to be below par in English language skills. Indeed, many children stay in a bilingual program throughout their elementary school career (see Rossell and Baker, 1988; Ramirez, 1991; Rossell, 1992). Transitional bilingual education is less common once a child reaches the grade where departmentalization occurs (different subjects taught by different teachers). Because teachers have to be certified in both a subject matter and in a foreign language to teach in a bilingual program in junior high and high school, few school districts are able to staff bilingual programs at these grade levels. Thus the typical

LEP child enters a regular English program in junior high school. It is only in the large school districts with large numbers of LEP students of a single language group that native-tongue instruction in one or more subjects might occur at the secondary level.

At least *nominally*, TBE appears to be the dominant special language instructional program in the U.S. The American Legislative Exchange Council and U.S. English (1994) recently reported 60 percent of the state and locally funded programs for LEP children were *labeled* bilingual education in 1991-92. I use the words "nominally" and "labeled" in a deliberate sense, however, because it is quite clear from visiting classrooms and reading evaluation reports that virtually the only children receiving native-tongue instruction in the U.S. according to the theory—learning to read and write in the native tongue and learning subject matter in the native tongue—are *Hispanic* children. This is because often only Hispanic children are a large enough group to have enough students speaking one language to fill a classroom *and* to have a teacher who is fluent in their native tongue.[1]

The bilingual education programs for Asian, African, and European students are not truly bilingual education. Asian, African, and European students in so-called bilingual education programs learn to read and write in *English*, exactly the opposite of the theory, and receive little native-tongue instruction beyond learning the alphabet and a few words or phrases. Thus, claims for the success of Asians in bilingual education programs cannot be taken at face value. Asian and African bilingual education programs are generally closer to what is called structured immersion (that is, instruction in English in a self-contained classroom of LEP students), even though for political, legal, or funding reasons they may be described as "bilingual education." The European bilingual education programs (e.g. Russian, Portuguese, Hebrew, Polish, etc.) stray even further afield from the theory. Many of them are simply regular classroom instruction with ESL pull-out support if needed. This lack of consistency in the treatment only complicates the issue of evaluating and analyzing the effects of bilingual education programs.

The research evidence presented here is the result of a collaboration with Keith Baker in updating our earlier reviews of the research on bilin-

gual education—Baker and de Kanter (1981, 1983) and Rossell and Ross (1986).[2] The total number of studies and books we have read now numbers above 500, of which 300 are program evaluations, in the sense that their purpose is to evaluate the effectiveness of TBE or some other second language acquisition technique. Reviewing the research was a frustrating and arduous task since most of it consists of local evaluations that do not even come close to meeting scientific standards, even when they are conducted by outside consulting firms that are supposedly hired for their methodological expertise. Unfortunately, the fact that an article is published in an academic journal does not guarantee it is scientific. Approximately 11 percent of the methodologically unacceptable studies were published in academic journals. It thus appears that millions of dollars are wasted each year on unscientific, descriptive evaluations of local school district bilingual education programs.

Methodologically Acceptable Studies

We found 72 out of 300 program evaluations—about one-fourth of the total—to be methodologically acceptable. Methodologically acceptable studies generally had the following characteristics:

1. They were true experiments in which students were randomly assigned to treatment and control groups.
2. They had non-random assignment that either matched students in the treatment and comparison groups on factors that influence achievement or statistically controlled for them.
3. They included a comparison group of LEP students of the same ethnicity and similar language background.
4. Outcome measures were in English using NCEs, raw scores, scale scores, percentiles, etc., but not grade equivalents.
5. Additional educational treatments were either nonexistent or controlled for.

Findings

Table 1 shows the effect of transitional bilingual education—compared to (1) "submersion," i.e., doing nothing, (2) ESL, (3) structured immersion, and (4) maintenance (long-term) bilingual education—on second language (usually English) reading, language, and mathematics as demonstrated by the 72 methodologically acceptable studies—all of them of Spanish bilingual education programs and students. Table 1 also shows the effect of structured immersion compared to ESL pull-out.[3] Studies are repeated in more than one category of outcome if they had different outcomes at different grade levels or for different cohorts—that is, a group of students in the same grade. Those not in the table are excluded because they did not assess alternative second-language learning programs or they did not meet the methodological criteria.

The percentages in Table 1 indicate the percentage of studies showing a program to be better than the alternative it is compared to, the percentage showing no difference, and the percentage showing the program to be worse than the alternative it is compared to. This is repeated for each achievement outcome—reading, language, and math. The total number of studies assessing the particular achievement outcome for each category of comparisons are shown below the percentages.

TBE v. Submersion. Table 1 indicates that for second language *reading*,[4] 22 percent of the studies show transitional bilingual education to be superior, 33 percent show it to be inferior, and 45 percent show it to be no different from submersion—that is, doing nothing. Altogether, 78 percent of the studies show TBE to be no different from or worse than the supposedly discredited submersion technique.

In a standardized achievement test of *language*, a test of a student's understanding of grammatical rules, transitional bilingual education does even worse than it does in reading. Seven percent of the studies show transitional bilingual education to be superior, 64 percent show it to be inferior, and 29 percent show it to be no different from submersion—doing nothing. Altogether, 93 percent of the studies show TBE to be no different from or worse than doing nothing at all.[5]

These more negative findings for language than for reading suggest

Table 1

Percent of Methodologically Acceptable Studies* Demonstrating Program Effectiveness by Achievement Test Outcome

	READING**	LANGUAGE	MATH
TBE v. Submersion (Do Nothing)			
TBE Better	22%	7%	9%
No Difference	45%	29%	56%
TBE Worse	33%	64%	35%
Total N	60	14	34
TBE v. ESL			
TBE Better	0%	0%	25%
No Difference	71%	67%	50%
TBE Worse	29%	33%	25%
Total N	7	3	4
TBE v. Submersion/ESL			
TBE Better	19%	6%	11%
No Difference	48%	35%	55%
TBE Worse	33%	59%	34%
Total N	67	17	38
TBE v. Structured Immersion			
TBE Better	0%	0%	0%
No Difference	17%	100%	63%
TBE Worse	83%	0%	38%
Total N	12	1	8
Structured Immersion v. ESL			
Immersion Better	100%	0%	0%
No Difference	0%	0%	0%
Total N	3	0	0
TBE v. Maint. BE			
TBE Better	100%	0%	0%
Total N	1	0	0

* Studies are listed in more than one category if there were different effects for different grade or cohorts.
** Oral English achievement for preschool programs.

that a child is less dependent on school for many of the skills learned in reading—decoding, vocabulary, and understanding concepts—than they are for grammar. The fine rules of grammar, it appears, are learned mostly in school, and because they are more complex, they are more influenced by school time on task. Thus, these results suggest there is a risk that bilingual education students will incur a deficit in English grammar rules because they have spent less time on them than have LEP children in an all-English environment.

In *math*, 9 percent of the studies show TBE to be superior, 35 percent show it to be inferior, and 56 percent show it to be no different from submersion. Altogether, 91 percent of the studies show it to be no different or worse than the supposedly discredited submersion technique in developing math proficiency.

TBE v. ESL. Although many so-called submersion situations probably have an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program where the students are pulled out of the regular classroom and taught English in small groups for a period a day or a few times a week, it is generally not specified in the evaluations. Nevertheless, we suspect that many of the studies classified above as submersion may in fact include an ESL pull-out component. In seven studies, transitional bilingual education is specifically compared to reading achievement in the regular classroom with ESL pull-out. None of these studies shows TBE to be better than ESL pull-out in reading. Five studies (71 percent) show no difference between transitional bilingual education and ESL in reading, and two studies (29 percent) show TBE to be worse than ESL. Of the three studies that examined language achievement, none showed TBE to be superior, two showed no difference between TBE and ESL, and one showed TBE to be worse. Of the four studies that examined math, one showed TBE to be superior, two showed no difference, and one showed TBE to be worse.

TBE v. Submersion/ESL. Because we suspect that many, if not most, of the so-called submersion alternatives had an ESL component, we also show in Table 1 the outcomes for a category (the third from the top) that combines submersion and ESL studies. Because of the small number of studies that specifically examine ESL pullout, there is virtually no difference in the findings: 81 percent of the studies show TBE to be no dif-

ferent from or worse than submersion/ESL in reading, 94 percent show TBE to be no different from or worse than submersion/ESL in language, and 89 percent show TBE to be no different from or worse than submersion/ESL in math.

TBE v. Structured Immersion. Table 1 also compares TBE to structured immersion, the fourth category from the top. Most of these studies come from the Canadian immersion programs, which come in several carefully documented types—early immersion (late bilingual), delayed immersion (early bilingual), dual immersion, and so forth. In many cases, we had to "translate" the programs into U.S. terminology. Twelve studies had reading outcomes, one study had language outcomes, and eight studies had math outcomes. No study showed TBE to be superior to structured immersion in reading, language, or math. In reading, 83 percent of the studies showed TBE to be worse than structured immersion, and 17 percent showed no difference. In language, the one study showed no difference. In math, five studies showed no difference, and three studies showed TBE to be worse than immersion.

Structured Immersion v. ESL. There were also three studies that compared structured immersion to ESL specifically. These studies all showed structured immersion to be superior to ESL in reading.

TBE v. Maintenance Bilingual Education. The final category in Table 1 compares transitional bilingual education to maintenance bilingual education, which continues native-tongue instruction after a child has become fluent in English. This study showed transitional bilingual education produced significantly higher English reading achievement than maintenance bilingual education.[8] In other words, more English time on task (TBE) produces higher English language achievement than less time on task (maintenance bilingual education).

Conclusions

The results shown in Table 1 suggest that the ideal program for second language learners is "structured immersion" where instruction is in English at a level the students can understand in a self-contained classroom consisting entirely of LEP students. While it may be helpful if a

teacher knows his or her students' native tongue, it is probably best for the students if the teacher is not *fluent* in it because, human nature being what it is, the more proficient a teacher is in a language, the more time he or she will spend teaching in it. Thus, contrary to the theory and current practice, I suspect that the better teachers of LEP children will be those who are more comfortable in English than their students' native tongue.

Nevertheless, it cannot be emphasized enough that the research clearly shows, as with all other educational interventions, that the intervention itself is only one of many important factors explaining achievement. Indeed, the most important factors in a child's acquisition of English and other subjects are the child's family characteristics, his or her intelligence, the characteristics of his or her classmates, and the intelligence and talent of his or her teacher. For most students, at least in an educational system in which all programs ultimately provide substantial amounts of English, the exact percentage of each language has, on average, explained only a small portion of the variance in achievement. Even in the worst cases, I am struck by how small the differences in academic achievement are—a maximum of about 15 points—between programs with very different amounts of English instruction. For any single student, however, there could be serious consequences to having little English instruction. As Table 1 indicates, substantially more studies show a harm from TBE, compared to all-English instruction, than show a benefit, and this disparity increases when the all-English program is structured immersion. Thus, the risk of academic deficiency in English is greater for TBE than for all-English instruction.

Nevertheless, transitional bilingual education as actually implemented is typically not a disaster, despite its potential to be so. The facilitation theory justifying bilingual education states that students must be taught to read and write in their native tongue until they reach proficiency in the native tongue (called the threshold effect) in order to achieve the highest level of cognitive development and English language achievement. This theory if blindly followed could result in a child never transitioning out of the native tongue and never learning English. Yet students in TBE do learn English and master content areas in English, although they may be behind their LEP schoolmates who are taught completely in English.

I suspect that the major reason why TBE is not more harmful is that many bilingual education teachers are subverting the theory. Rather than waiting until their students are proficient in reading and writing in their native tongue as the theory advocates, they transition their students fairly quickly into English. Unfortunately, this cannot be said for all of them. Some teachers are ardent believers of the theories they have been taught, and their students are in TBE and native-tongue instruction for the entire time they are in school. As a result, my policy recommendation is for all-English instruction for LEP children, preferably structured immersion, although the period of being in a self-contained classroom must be of a very short duration, a year or less. The research evidence suggests that all-English instruction holds the least risk and usually has the greatest benefit for limited-English-proficient children.

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Endnotes

[1] Moreover, [illegible] the Spanish language teachers have non-native speakers fluent in the language. Because we share a border with a Spanish speaking country, there is ample opportunity for non-Hispanics to learn Spanish. In addition, Spanish is an easier language to learn for English speaking people than are any of the Asian or African languages. Thus, the non-Spanish bilingual programs have a much smaller teacher labor pool to draw from since virtually the only people who speak Cantonese, Khmer, Vietnamese, Cape Verdean, Haitian Creole, etc., are native speakers, almost all of them immigrants.

[2] This collaboration has produced a 1995 book *Bilingual Education Reform in Massachusetts*, published by Pioneer Institute in Boston, Mass.

[3] All of the studies in Table 1 appear in complete citation form in Rossell and Baker (1996).

[4] We included oral progress in preschool or kindergarten in this category since a reading test for these grades is obviously inappropriate.

[5] Neither Baker and de Kanter (1981, 1983) nor Rossell and Ross (1986) examined language since at that time there were too few studies that examined this outcome.

[6] Ramirez et al., 1991 also examined maintenance bilingual education (late-exit bilingual education), but unfortunately did not directly compare it to transitional bilingual education (contrary to media reports and his own conclusions). Although his graphs appeared to show that the students in late-exit bilingual education were doing worse than the students in transitional bilingual education, no statistical analysis was performed to verify that.

What Bilingual Education Research Tells Us

By Keith Baker

From 1979 to 1989, I worked in the main evaluation office of the U.S. Department of Education, where I directed a number of extensive studies of bilingual education. I was also a major participant in formulating federal policy on the education of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. When the White House Regulatory Review Group asked the U.S. Department of Education if bilingual education programs were effective, the department put me in charge of finding the answer.

I also planned, designed, and directed the largest study done by the federal government of the validity of procedures used to exit LEPs from special programs for LEPs. I know of no valid scientific research that shows that any LEP student would benefit from more than three years of bilingual education to prepare them to participate in the mainstream classroom.

I know of no scientifically valid evidence that supports the New York State Education Commissioner's policy and practice of routinely extending beyond three years the time LEP students are segregated from full participation with their peers in the mainstream classroom. I know of no psychometrically valid or scientifically sound definition of "academic profi-

This article is excerpted from Keith Baker's affidavit in Bushwick Parents Organization *v.* Richard P. Mills, Commissioner of Education of the State of New York.

ciency in English." I know of no valid way to measure it. The material filed by Aspira of New York, Inc. does not provide such a definition or method of measurement.[1]

There is no valid research evidence that it takes five to seven years for LEP students to become "academically proficient in English." I once traced the origins of this claim to a study of Italian immigrant students in a large Canadian city. This study found that these students attained *full English proficiency*, e.g., attained the 50th percentile in English, not academic proficiency, in five to seven years *in the absence of any special help with learning English.*

There are two problems with the allegation that it takes five to seven years to achieve academic proficiency in English. First, since these students attained full English proficiency in five to seven years without any special help, any effective program, by definition, must produce proficiency in less than five to seven years.

The second problem is that the 50th percentile indicates full English proficiency, that is, equivalence with the native-speaking English population. The 50th percentile is not an "academic proficiency" in the sense of the level of English ability needed to succeed in school. Full English proficiency is a higher level of English competence than is "academic proficiency."

One study, using a nationally representative sample of over 300 programs for LEPs, found that, depending on the type of program, the average length of time that students were in a special program for LEPs was 2.6 to 3.5 years.[2] This study also showed that students remained longer in programs as the use of Spanish increased in their program.

Some studies done for the U.S. Department of Education show that the selection of students for programs for LEPs and their exit from such programs is largely arbitrary.[3] That is, school policy rather than any characteristic of the student is the factor playing the biggest role in deciding when a student is placed in or exited from a program for LEPs.

This situation comes about in large part because of poor validity of tests such as the Language Assessment Battery (LAB). These tests can classify large numbers of native-English-speaking children as LEP.[4] It is not appropriate to assume that a low level of English is caused by a depen-

dence on some other language to communicate. Consequently, time limits on enrollment in bilingual education programs can protect students from the common errors of miscalculation associated with LEP identification procedures.

Percentile scores are a moving target, not a fixed criterion. The amount of knowledge that must be known to maintain the 40th percentile increases with each year of age. Consequently, if placement decisions are made solely on percentile scores, many LEP students will never qualify for placement in the mainstream classroom.

Dr. Otheguy's statement that "those students who had been in mainstream classes for longer, did better on these English language tests" supports the conclusion that limiting the time students spend in bilingual education programs is wise policy.[5] I cannot find any data in the October 1994 report of the New York City Board of Education (the BOE Study) to support the statement in Dr. Otheguy's affidavit that bilingual education students who had been mainstreamed for more than four years, began to outperform their fellow students who had only taken ESL classes on math and reading tests.

The Board of Education Study shows that 56.1 percent of ESL students with four years in the mainstream scored at or above the 50th percentile on reading, compared to only 39.3 percent of bilingual program students. Math scores were comparable: 72 percent for ESL students and 57.5 percent for bilingual students.

Aspira and Dr. Otheguy criticize the BOE study for failure to control for socioeconomic status (SES) between the ESL and bilingual education program groups. However, it is likely that these students are low SES because they are LEPs and mostly recent immigrants. Any SES variance between the two groups reasonably can be assumed to be trivial. Moreover, neither the law nor the theory of bilingual education programs makes the program conditional on SES; that is, no alternatives based on different levels of SES are specified; all SES levels are treated the same.

The best that can be said about bilingual education programs is that the programs in which a low level of Spanish is used in the classroom produce impressive gains in Spanish and do not harm learning English or other academic subjects. El Paso Independent School District compared

two types of bilingual education programs for 10 years. One used the state-mandated level of Spanish. The other used considerably less Spanish.

The lower usage level of Spanish produced better results in all academic areas except Spanish for nine years. In the 10th year, the high level of Spanish-usage students finally caught up with the low level of Spanish-usage students. This extensive study indicates (1) too much Spanish in school hinders learning English; (2) it takes years of full-time exposure to English for the students handicapped by exposure to too much Spanish to catch up; (3) the harmful level of Spanish is less than the level of Spanish commonly advocated for use in bilingual education programs.

Endnotes

[1] Aspira, respondent intervenor, motion to dismiss. *Bushwick Parents Organization* v. *Richard P. Mills, Commissioner of Education of the State of New York.*

[2] Young et al. (1984), *Descriptive phrase report.* Arlington, Va.: Development Associates.

[3] Burkheimer et al. (1989), *Effectiveness of services for LM-LEP students,* RTI: Research Triangle Park, N.C. and Pelavin et al. (1988) *Selection procedures for identifying students in need of special language services,* Pelavin Associates: Washington, D.C.

[4] C.F. Berden et al. (1982), *Language among the Cherokee,* NCBR: Los Alamitos, Calif.

[5] Dr. Otheguy Affadavit. *Bushwick Parents Organization* v. *Richard P. Mills, Commissioner of Education of the State of New York.*

The Politics of Bilingual Education Revisited

By Rosalie Pedalino Porter

The issues raised and discussed when my book, *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education*, was first published in 1990 have not been resolved, but a quiet revolution is taking place. School districts that for years have provided native-language teaching—with poor results—for the new population of immigrant, migrant, and refugee children entering American classrooms are turning to the sensible, pragmatic approach they should have used in the first place. I see a definite trend across the country toward replacing the failed bilingual education programs with special English-language instruction, giving these students the means to gain entry into the school community quickly and effectively instead of segregating them for years in separate classes.

For the 2.5 million children who do not know the English language when they enter U.S. classrooms—the fastest growing group of students in our schools due to the highest immigration levels in U.S. history during the past two decades—there is still no clear agreement on how best to educate them. Are there measurable benefits in teaching these children in their native language for a period of time, to ensure their learning of school subjects while they gradually learn the English language? In what regions are these students concentrated, and what languages do they speak? How much money are we spending on special programs for this population, and what evidence have we collected of the success or failure of these special efforts? How long does it take to learn English well enough to be able to do school work in English? New data reported in the

past five years paint a bleak picture of the kind of schooling we are giving these students.

The current population of limited-English students is being treated in ways that earlier immigrant groups were not. The politically righteous assumption that these children cannot learn English quickly and must be taught all their school subjects in their native language for three to seven years is seriously hurting their chances for an equal educational opportunity and, ironically, is producing more segregation in our schools.

When the experimental program called "bilingual education" was introduced in federal legislation under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1968, the stated intent was to help children overcome the language barrier to an equal education, that is, to give them the English language skills they need for learning in a regular classroom with their English-speaking classmates. Ethnic group interests and political expediency instead promoted the idea that limited-English students, in all circumstances, must not be exposed to English too soon or their potential for learning reading, writing, math, science, history, etc., would suffer—an early assumption that has been demonstrated to be untrue.

Not only is there much more evidence of the failure of bilingual education to do the two things it was intended to do—promote more effective English-language learning and the learning of school subjects—but there is more information available on actual student achievement in places where special English programs are being used.

One of the darkest notes in the bilingual education saga is the gravely disconcerting news that in some of the states with the heaviest concentrations of limited-English students and the greatest investment of money and energy for several years in bilingual programs, there has been an almost total lack of accountability. Data on student progress have not been collected, nor has evidence for the superior benefits of native language teaching been documented. Both California and Massachusetts, in state reports published in 1992 and 1994 respectively, admitted to these failures. The state of California, with 1.2 million limited-English students (20 percent of all its schoolchildren) also reported that teachers were not testing students for exit from bilingual programs and keeping these children in bilingual classrooms years beyond the point where they need spe-

cial help.

Of all the recent new information available, the study published in October 1994 by the New York City Board of Education deserves special attention. This study compares two large groups of limited-English students who were placed in radically different programs. Spanish and Haitian Creole-speaking students were mostly enrolled in bilingual programs and taught in their native language, with only brief English lessons. Chinese, Korean, and Russian-speaking children were assigned to an English as a Second Language (ESL) program where all instruction from the first day of school is given through a special English curriculum. Their progress was monitored for four years to document their learning of English and math and to determine the number of years they needed to exit to a mainstream classroom.

Will it surprise anyone to learn that at all grade levels students served in ESL classrooms exited their programs faster than those served in bilingual classrooms? Most students in the ESL program were out of it in two to three years, while most students in bilingual classes took four to seven years to move into regular classrooms. In fact, the study reports that the less time students spent in the special programs the more successful they were in reading and math (taught in English) in mainstream classrooms. The ultimate expression of cynicism was the comment of a school superintendent in a New York district who said to me, "They had to do a research study to know this?"

In New York as in California, it is not state or federal laws but the power of state education bureaucracies that forces local school districts to provide unwanted programs. In California, where the bilingual education law expired in 1987, and each school district actually has the right to design its own program for language minority students, only 20 out of 1,000 school districts have succeeded in obtaining approval from the California Department of Education for ESL rather than native-language teaching programs. Teachers are so frustrated and disappointed with bilingual education in California that in May 1995 the California Teachers' Association—the first teachers' union in the country to do so—took the unprecedented action of publishing a long article highlighting the serious drawbacks of this program.

Yet, in the past five years of writing and lecturing on education policy in this country and abroad, and as a consultant to various school districts on improving the education of language minority students, I am observing some very heartening developments. At the grassroots level—not in the universities or in the state education bureaucracies—individual teachers, school principals, school board members, and parents are opposing the continuation of bilingual education programs in their own locales and fighting for new approaches.

The complaint is typically voiced in these terms: "We have been using native-language teaching for our limited-English kids for eight, 10, or 12 years, with bilingual teachers and textbooks, but it is working very poorly. Our students are not learning English for years, are not doing well in school subjects, they're segregated for too long, and they get discouraged and drop out of school in unacceptable numbers. We don't begrudge the money for a special program, but we want something that works, and bilingual education is not it." One group of Latino parents in Brooklyn, N.Y., have even initiated a lawsuit against the New York State Commissioner of Education, complaining that their children are being kept in bilingual classrooms far too many years, are not learning English, and are suffering the consequences.

Among the many appeals of this sort that I have responded to, there are a few representative examples worth describing.

■ A school principal in an elementary school in Lowell, Mass., enlisted my help to retrain his teachers to focus on English-language teaching in the classroom and to substantially reduce the amount of teaching in Spanish. Unfortunately, the district administration later disapproved of the new approach and made the school continue its bilingual program.

■ The Seattle, Wash., School District, which provides a variety of special programs for 6,000 limited-English students from 90 different language backgrounds, was sued by a group of activists demanding more native-language instruction. The district stood firm in its commitment to the intensive English focus of its programs. The district demonstrated the positive results in academic and social benefits for its students and was not forced to change its successful approach.

■ In 1993, the Bethlehem, Pa., Area School District decided to re-

place its 12-year-old Spanish bilingual program, which had produced unsatisfactory results, with an English Acquisition Program. Thanks to the fortitude of the school superintendent, who faced up to some hostile activists from the Latino and education community, a team of professional staff members in the district were able to plan a new program, retrain staff, write a new curriculum, and set an evaluation model in place to monitor student progress (this last item is too often a missing element in new programs).

After two years with its English Acquisition Program, Bethlehem reports that it has discontinued busing limited-English students as they are now integrated in their neighborhood schools. A survey of parents and teachers also shows major support for the new effort. Beginning in 1996, data on student achievement are being collected for an annual report.

■ One teacher stands out among the hundreds who have called or written me after reading *Forked Tongue*. Most often, even tenured teachers tell me they do not speak out against bilingual education for fear of being labeled as racists. Yet Suzanne Guerrero is a moving and courageous exception. After 14 years as a Spanish bilingual teacher in the Salinas, Calif., public schools, she is convinced that the bilingual approach is not only ineffective but harmful to her students, and she has dared to publish her complaints.

In an article she wrote for her local teachers' union newsletter, Guerrero said, "I am an American of Mexican heritage. Am I also a racist because I oppose bilingual education after personally observing that it just is not working? Definitely not!...The sooner a child begins to learn a second language, the more rapidly and effectively he will acquire that language for social purposes and academic learning. Also, the human brain acquires language more easily the younger a child is. There is no sound reason to delay the learning of English." One passionately hopes that Guerrero's example will encourage others.

Certainly, advances have been made in the public understanding of the plight of language-minority students in our schools, in the increased willingness of school districts to strike out in new directions, and in expanding the research base on educational alternatives. More is generally known about the myriad factors that affect second-language learning and

academic achievement besides school programs, such as age, personality, motivation, family aspirations, culture, parents' educational level, family transience, and socioeconomic status. Increasing numbers of educators understand that there will never be one school program that fits all language-minority children in all school districts. One wishes more politicians and ethnic activists understood this but "doing the right thing" politically is still the fashion.

Sadly, the public dialogue is still heavily weighted toward the status quo—blindly loyal support for bilingual education. One small example makes the point. At the Center for Equal Opportunity's conference on "The Future of Bilingual Education" in the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., in September 1995, at which I presented this paper, it was expected that there would be speakers representing different viewpoints. Supporters and critics alike were invited to participate in panel discussions. Bilingual education advocates—Virginia Collier, Stephen Krashen, James Crawford, and others—turned down the invitation but chose to speak instead at the counterconference organized on the same day at an earlier hour by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the National Association for Bilingual Education. This provided no opportunity for the two camps to engage in civilized discourse. Unfortunately, this is the reality of the debate.

From its inception, bilingual education has not embraced diversity of educational ideas but fostered fierce protection of a single dogma, a panacea that failed. I am more committed than ever to the ideas I first voiced in *Forked Tongue* in 1990. I have greater certainty in them today because what I learned in my early years in this field has been reinforced many times over.

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Realizing Democratic Ideals with Bilingual Education

By Irma N. Guadarrama

The latest battle over the legitimacy of bilingual education is far too politically and socially loaded to dismiss as yet another debate in a long series. It's not surprising that critics again question the validity of bilingual education as an effective educational program because that has always been a point of conflict in the 25 years I have been following the debates. However, what is disturbing is the labeling of bilingual education as a program having goals that are antithetical to the American agenda, and that it is a subversive attempt to undermine the progress of a democratic nation that seeks to empower its citizens and build a strong future.

My reactions to these allegations and others are mixed. On one hand, I consider myself an insider because of my professional work. I started as a bilingual education teacher in San Antonio, and my career has centered on the education of language-minority students. But, as one of seven children of immigrant parents who came to this country with ideals and determination to carve out a promising future as U.S. citizens, I also know the outsider's view. My first language was Spanish, and when I entered first grade I spoke no English. My views originate from a broad-based experience, and my focus is primarily pedagogical. From my perspective, bilingual education, when implemented by knowledgeable and committed individuals, not only creates venues for helping students achieve educational equality but also mirrors democracy in action.

The intensity of emotions and rhetorical outbursts exhibited in the

discussions and debates over bilingual education often are manifestations of the current political landscape. Today, bilingual education is not only facing reduced federal funding, but is also being accused of having a hidden, and pervasive agenda by those seeking to broaden their particular ideological base. In defense of bilingual education, we must address not only the effectiveness of the program in educational terms, but also its political justification in playing an essential role in our democratic society. Bilingual education clearly has become an icon that extends beyond just a curriculum; bilingual education is also about power, politics, representation, democracy, and culture.

The historical account of race and power in our country is beyond the scope of this paper, but suffice it to say that the struggle between the powerful and the powerless has yielded wide chasms between minorities and non-minorities. Many argue that any changes which have occurred are only superficial.

What has changed, perhaps, are the key words and what they signify. For some, the political connotation of cultural democracy is freedom of self-expression, while for others it is an irresponsible construct that contradicts democratic ideals. For some, cultural conformity means sacrificing one's own culture for the sake of national unity, while for others it is the containment within borders of another's culture in which self-expression is inhibited. Even the term inclusion has various signifiers. Inclusion is a word widely used to denote the extension of opportunities for legitimizing diversity in substantive ways, yet for some inclusion signifies assimilationism, whereas exclusion signifies the acceptance and incorporation of differences into mainstream society.

Similarly, bilingual education signifies to some a program that acts irresponsibly by posing as an obstacle to quick assimilation by individuals whose native language is not English. In the same vein, bilingual education is viewed as an instrument of empowerment, which enables marginalized individuals to engage in the democratic process, i.e., to participate fully in our society's social, economic, political, and educational institutions. However, this empowerment poses a threat to those who view it as extending beyond their norms of cultural conformity.

The impact of powerful, conflicting ideologies has been costly, es-

pecially to language-minority students. Often caught in the political crossfire, students receive disjointed messages that serve to confuse and misguide them. One can argue that students have been shortchanged because the educational programs designed to target their needs waver in a sea of indecisiveness due to the volatile politics surrounding multicultural and multilingual issues. Students often are left to figure out for themselves what society expects of them when their native language and culture are alternately valued and devalued.

The public also receives conflicting messages. So much so that the act of voting or shaping a political opinion is oftentimes a task of sorting out symbolism submerged in rhetoric. Public opinion is, for the most part, influenced by political and social factors rather than accurate information. A 1983 study to assess the relationship between information and opinion within the context of symbolic politics makes this point well.

Researcher David Sears analyzed the data collected from 1,170 randomly selected non-Hispanic respondents. He was able to claim that non-Hispanics have strong opinions concerning bilingual education, much of it negative, even when they have little or no substantive knowledge about it. Approximately 30 percent of the respondents had a near accurate definition of bilingual education, but only 16 percent were able to define it as instruction in two languages. Of the 70 percent whose responses were deemed less than accurate, one-third had never given bilingual education a thought!

Accuracy plays a minor role in the persuasive arguments of opponents of bilingual education. But, relevant facts and essential understanding of the subject are pivotal to meaningful debate. It is important to consider information that clarifies key concepts and terminology in bilingual education and, in the process, to dispel misconceptions and set straight unfounded claims.

1. Know the fallacies in research.

Opponents of bilingual education still rely on research findings as the main weapon in their efforts to disclaim its legitimacy. However, neither supporters nor opponents of bilingual education are satisfied with the results of the effectiveness of bilingual education research primarily be-

cause the collected data lack unequivocal proof.

Researchers evaluating bilingual education encounter two main problems: (1) It is virtually impossible to identify a control group that is comparable to the treatment group because serving one group of qualified students over another presents legal (and ethical) problems, and (2) even if failure and/or success are identified among student achievement, the effects cannot be attributed solely to bilingual education, because other social and economic factors play an integral role in education.

In their book, *Bilingual Education Reform in Massachusetts,* political scientists Christine Rossell and Keith Baker use hypothetical notions of what is regarded as bilingual education theory as their basis on which to prove that bilingual education is not working. In reality, bilingual education works because teachers know how to make it work, and the most effective programs are implemented by well-informed, committed teachers. Rossell and Baker's work is irresponsible and shortsighted. The authors have only circumstantial knowledge about their subject, are indifferent to how their work may adversely affect the efforts of dedicated educators, and know that they will receive accolades from the public who look for the published word to affirm sectarian beliefs.

At another level is author Rosalie Pedalino Porter, a former director of bilingual education programs, who disapproves of the use of the native language for instructional purposes. Porter's strongest arguments, however, are substantiated at an emotional level rather than a factual one. A good example of Porter's line of argument can be found on page 207 of her book, *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education*: "[I]t is essentially dishonest to hold out the promise that development of native-language skills for several years will lead to better learning of English." By "dishonest," who is she referring to? Teachers? Parents? Is her statement based on fact, or is it opinion disguised as fact? One would be more apt to question her "honesty," in the deceitful manner she employed to deliver her message.

Finally, it's important to recognize that the serious problem with many empirically-based research designs in bilingual education is their overreliance on single indices to measure effectiveness, and miss some of the program's most significant successes, i.e., the affective gains of students.

2. Understand the relationship between learning theory and bilingual education.

One of the most cogent arguments in support of bilingual education is that children learn best when instruction proceeds from the known to the unknown. A corollary to learning theory is the definitive role of prior knowledge in learning. Native-language-based instruction is aligned with learning theory, and as a crucial component of bilingual education, contributes to the pedagogy that encompasses both the students' culture and language as well as the socialization and politics that result from the convergence of experiences.

Bilingual education eludes any one, permanent theoretical base because context plays a significant role and is a crucial determiner in its implementation. Many longtime educators maintain their support for bilingual education because it is theoretically sound, and its possibilities for education in general supersede the relentless bombardment of criticism. Based on critical theory, bilingual education is a pedagogy in which the players, i.e., students, teachers, parents, are part of the inherent transformative process. And as such, the professional development of teachers is crucial. Without an adequate knowledge and experience base, bilingual education teachers may falter on the chance to create learning opportunities of a lifetime for their students. But, here again, professional development programs for bilingual education teachers are effective only when they are endorsed and backed in full by policy; the administration at the local, state, and national levels; and the public.

3. Understand the role others' perspectives of language play in bilingual education.

The views of language held by many, including those who oppose bilingual education, often reflect a misconstrued understanding of language. Commonly held misconceptions include that language has the power to alter people radically, that maintaining people's native language will enslave them from their free will and greatly slow the process of assimilation, and even place the security of our country at risk.

There are, of course, several auspicious points that can contribute to a better understanding of language and second-language learning. The

need, however, is to focus on the fact that people shape the language, not the other way around, and that language is primarily a tool used to communicate and to express one's culture. That people overestimate the contours of language only reveals their conception of language as power; as such, they are compelled to react politically, often instilling in others a false sense of fear.

The so-called perils of bilingualism are frequently brought up by the topic of separatism in Quebec. Historians point out that the real source of tension began in the 18th century when the English gained their domination over the French in North America. Quebec citizens struggle for an "identity" that is historically and politically based, yet the perceived culprit is the French language. What many observers fail to see is that a people's identity is not only a way of life, but a way of defining oneself in historical terms, all in which culture and language play a supporting role.

4. Understand the basic premises of bilingual education and beyond.

Bilingual education, with its multidimensional curriculum designed to help language-minority students achieve academic success, defies a simple definition. But we can argue that in its most basic form, bilingual education is instruction in two languages. To the extent that it is effective and successful depends on how successfully the curriculum meets the needs of the students it serves. At the heart of the curriculum are the principles of education based on democratic ideals and expectations that apply to all students. What is unique about bilingual education students is that they aspire and achieve in two cultures and two languages. The issue is not so much whether students will learn English, because we know they will, but rather whether they will achieve academic success and engage as contributing members of our society in meaningful, productive ways.

Our democratic form of government, with all its complexity and challenges, requires constant and demanding participation by its citizens. It is by no means a simple form of government.

When we require the citizenry to learn about an issue, our leaders take the initiative in doing so. However, in the case of bilingual education, the strategy by some of our leaders has been to suppress knowledge and reject attempts to help people clarify their misunderstandings.

For example, presidential candidate Sen. Robert Dole's comments to the American Legion in Indianapolis in September 1995 are representative of the lack of interest on the part of our leaders to increase understanding of an issue. Instead, his message served to widen further a political wedge. Dole said, "Insisting that all our citizens are fluent in English is a welcoming act of inclusion, and insist we must. We need the glue of language to help hold us together." However, what we really need is the glue of understanding how we and others learn first and second languages to help hold us together. Understanding and acknowledging the benefits of bilingual education is tantamount to a greater acceptance and support for linguistic and cultural diversity among our student population.

5. Bilingual education and democratic ideals.

Bilingual education has been falsely depicted as a dumping ground for everyone's nightmares. But its goals and objectives are deeply rooted in the democratic ideals in our institutions of education. It helps students learn English and facilitates their academic success; it nurtures and promotes bilingualism; it promotes harmony among people by fostering understanding; and in the long run, it cuts government costs because students who receive a meaningful education stay in school, graduate from high school, and perhaps even college. Bilingual education affords students the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in our democracy.

There are still flaws in implementing many educational programs, including bilingual education. But problems in implementing bilingual education are related to its operational aspects not to its philosophy.

The question remains: Are we willing to work in concert and reap the rewards as a nation? Consider the vision of bilingual education as an opportunity for us to harness linguistic resources and give the precious gift of bilingualism to our children who in turn can give it to their children. It is indeed a noble and visionary gift a nation can bestow upon its children.

Language and the Second Generation: Bilingualism Yesterday and Today

By Alejandro Portes and Richard Schauffler

The current controversy over language is best understood in the context of a cyclical trend in the history of the United States since colonial days. Descendants of earlier immigrants who had "dropped the hyphen" and considered themselves plain Americans have often looked upon later arrivals as the source of potential cultural disintegration. This was true even prior to the Revolutionary War. Benjamin Franklin complained as early as 1751 that German immigrants in Pennsylvania "will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our language or customs, any more than they can acquire our complexion" (Franklin [1751], 1959).

The notion of "one nation, one language" was often idealized as a state of linguistic perfection to which the nation should return. This idea was discussed at length by philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries, including President John Adams, who contended that "language influences not only the form of government, but the temper, sentiments, and manners of the people" (Adams [1780], 1856).

During the colonial and early independence period, the notion that the country and its citizens were defined by a common language was justi-

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fied on two grounds. First, along with incipient American nationalism came the idea that American English both reflected and constituted the democratic and rational nature of the country. Second, the acquisition and use of English was seen as the litmus test of citizenship. Lacking a common culture or common history, the use of English became the essential part of "real" Americanism (Baron, 1990). The two rationales were related insofar as the ability to think logically, seen as necessary for a democracy, was only possible on the basis of fluency in English.

The perceived necessity for "Good English" has taken many forms throughout American history. In 1902, for example, New Mexico's statehood was delayed until, in the words of one prominent politician of the time, "the migration of English-speaking people who have been citizens of other states does its modifying work with the Mexican element" (Baron, 1991:8). Nebraska banned teaching any foreign language to students below the ninth grade in 1919 and organized formal "Good English" campaigns from 1918 to the early 1920s. At the time, language loyalty oaths were commonly extracted from schoolchildren (Dillard, 1985; Marckwardt, 1980).

In this and other ways, in schools and public life, monolingualism was linked to the idea of democracy, national unity, and allegiance to the country. Although many parents of upper- and middle-class backgrounds encouraged their children to learn Latin, French, or German, bilingualism on the part of recent immigrants was frowned upon. As today, that attitude was prompted by the existence of large ethnic communities which lay beyond the pale of the English-speaking population, out of sight but never out of mind.

During the early 20th century, opposition to bilingualism derived strength from the then-dominant scientific wisdom. Academic studies in the fields of education and psychology argued that bilingualism created failure, mental confusion, and damaged the psychological well-being of immigrant children. Two schools of thought existed at the time: one which argued that lower intelligence caused the failure of children to acquire English, and another which argued the opposite.

The first school (low intelligence: low English) based its conclusions on beliefs about genetic differences between races, arguing that

heredity limited the ability of immigrants to learn. The second school (low English: low intelligence) based its conclusions on beliefs about environmental factors, in particular the use of a foreign language at home. Intellectual failure was imputed by this school to the "linguistic confusion" of children exposed to two languages.

It was not until 1962 that these views were convincingly disproved by a methodologically sound study of the effects of bilingualism on cognitive ability. French- and English-speaking children in Canada were studied by Peal and Lambert (1962) who demonstrated that, if social class was taken into account, true bilingualism was associated with higher scores on a variety of intelligence tests (see also Cummins, 1981; Lambert and Tucker, 1972). True bilinguals, defined as those who could communicate competently in two languages, were shown to enjoy a greater degree of cognitive flexibility and an enhanced ability to deal with abstract concepts than their monolingual peers. Instead of creating "confusion," having two symbols for each object enhanced understanding.

Subsequent studies have generally supported the findings of Peal and Lambert's pioneer study. An analysis of a national sample of high school students in the United States, for example, found a positive correlation between academic achievement and bilingualism among Hispanic youth (Fernandez and Nielsen, 1986). More recently, a study of San Diego high school students also showed significant differences in academic performance between bilinguals and monolinguals, as well as between true bilinguals (defined by the local school system as fluent English proficient) and semi-bilinguals (defined as limited English proficient). Again, true bilingualism was shown to have a positive effect on scholastic achievement (Rumbaut and Ima, 1988).

Despite accumulating factual evidence on the advantage of bilingualism, the United States is unique in the rate at which other languages have been abandoned in favor of English. Lieberson, Dalto, and Johnston (1975) provide evidence showing that in no other country have foreign languages been extinguished with such speed. In the past, the typical pattern has been for the first generation to learn enough English to survive economically; the second generation continued to speak the parental tongue at home, but English in school, at work, and in public life; by the

third generation, the home language shifted to English, which effectively became the mother tongue for subsequent generations.

This pattern has held true for all immigrant groups in the past with the exception of some isolated minorities. As in previous periods of high immigration, the fear of nativist groups is that the pattern is about to be abandoned. However, growing research evidence about the cognitive effects of bilingualism indicates that the obverse of that question should also be examined. That is, to the extent that knowledge of two languages has positive effects, it is also important to inquire about the determinants of preservation of foreign languages.

Possible outcomes of the clash of languages confronted by second generation youths are fairly clear. They can be arranged in a continuum ranging from full language assimilation (English monolingualism) to fluent bilingualism to full language retention (monolingualism in the parental language). Recent theoretical developments in the sociology of immigration can be brought to bear on the analysis of these outcomes insofar as they emphasize the significance of social class and social context in the adaptation of immigrant groups.

Clearly, newcomers from more advantaged educational and occupational backgrounds tend to do better on the average, but often individual resources interact with the social context that receives them. Hence, immigrants who face an unfavorable governmental or societal reception may find their human capital skills seriously devalued, while those in the opposite situation may put their individual resources to full use. In addition, those who arrive into large and economically diversified co-ethnic communities may advance rapidly through use of the social capital that community networks make available (Massey, Goldring, and Durand, 1994; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993).

These general notions translate into certain expectations concerning the linguistic adaptation of second generation youths. Children growing up in sociocultural contexts where the native English-speaking majority is dominant or where immigrants from other linguistic backgrounds are most numerous will experience a faster process of home-language loss and a rapid conversion to English monolingualism. Conversely, those raised in contexts where a large co-national concentration exists will have greater

probability of parental language preservation.

In such instances, there will be a clear economic incentive to retain proficiency in that language, along with greater facilities for learning and practicing it within the community. The predicted outcome will be widespread bilingualism.

Parental socioeconomic background will have contradictory effects on bilingualism because, while educated and wealthier parents may wish to transmit their language, they will also make available more opportunities for their children to enter the cultural mainstream. The prediction, in this case, is of a positive effect of family socioeconomic status on English proficiency along with an insignificant effect on parental language retention.

Finally, the passage of time will inexorably lead toward greater English proficiency and English preference and gradual abandonment of the immigrants' tongues. In this case, we draw on the American historical record to anticipate that, regardless of the size and economic power of the co-ethnic community, the trend over time will be away from bilingualism. These arguments can be summarized in the following three hypotheses:

1. Language assimilation (English monolingualism) among the second generation will vary directly with demographic dispersion of the immigrant group and with length of U.S. residence.

2. Bilingualism will vary directly with demographic concentration and economic diversification of the immigrant community and inversely with length of U.S. residence.

3. Parental status will lead toward greater English proficiency, but not toward greater bilingualism due to its contradictory effects on children's cultural adaptation.

The site of our study, south Florida, has been so transformed by recent immigration that several commentators have actually placed it as culturally closer to Latin America and the Caribbean than to the rest of the nation (Rieff, 1987). Miami, in particular, is home to more foreign-born residents on a proportional basis than any other American city. Cuban exiles have built a large and diversified ethnic community, which also serves as a cultural resource for other Latin American immigrants.

Haitians have sought to do the same in Little Haiti, a neighborhood which lies directly adjacent to Liberty City, Miami's main African-American area. Many native-born whites have reacted to the immigrant influx and the emergence of the Cuban enclave by leaving the city or by militantly supporting the English-only movement. The result has been a debate over language more acrimonious than in other American cities (Portes and Stepick, 1993).

In 1973, county commissioners voted to declare Dade County officially bilingual. Seven years later, however, a grassroots-led referendum repealed that ordinance, and replaced it with a new one stipulating that public funds could not be used to teach languages other than English or "promote a culture other than the culture of the United States" (Boswell and Curtis, 1984).

In early 1993, however, the newly elected Dade County Commission, where Cuban Americans now comprised a plurality, rescinded the anti-bilingual ordinance, mandating that public notices and brochures be printed in Spanish and, in certain cases, in French Creole, as well as in English. The decision triggered an immediate spate of lawsuits by opponents who argued that the county could not countermand the English-only amendment to the state constitution, passed two years earlier (Stewart, 1993).

There is little doubt that foreign languages, particularly Spanish, are widely spoken by first-generation exiles and immigrants in south Florida. This pattern parallels that followed by large immigrant groups in the past. Italian, Polish, and Jewish communities created by turn-of-the-century immigration also retained their home languages for a long time (Glazer, 1954). The central theoretical and policy question, however, is the language shift in the second generation and the effects on it of time, differential levels of ethnic clustering, and parental status.

It is possible, as some nativists argue, that the extraordinary concentration of immigrants in this area is changing the historical patterns and creating instead a permanent linguistic enclave where Spanish is the predominant language. Alternatively, south Florida may simply be in the early stages of absorbing a large foreign influx which, in due time, will follow the time-honored pattern.

We examine this question on the basis of data from a survey of 2,843 eighth- and ninth-grade students in Miami (Dade County) and adjacent Fort Lauderdale (Broward County) schools. Inclusion of schools in Fort Lauderdale was dictated by the need to compare highly clustered immigrant communities in Miami with a nearby area where immigrants and their children are far more dispersed among the native population.

The sample included children from the most diverse national origins although, reflecting the composition of the immigrant population to the area, the largest contingents come from Cuba, Nicaragua, other Latin American countries, Haiti, and the West Indies. The survey defined "second generation" as youths born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent or as children born abroad who had lived in the United States for at least five years. The sample is evenly divided between boys and girls, and the average age is 14.8 years. The sampling design used for the survey included both inner-city and suburban schools and targeted schools where children of particular immigrant groups were known to concentrate, as well as those where immigrants of diverse nationalities were dispersed among a majority native-born population.

The first question of interest is the extent to which today's children of immigrants coming from different national origins become proficient in English. On this point, the evidence is unmistakable. For the sample as a whole, 73 percent reported that they were able to speak, understand, read, and write English "very well" and an additional 26 percent "well." This left the sum total of those knowing little or no English at just 1 percent.

Only age, national origin, and length of U.S. residence were significantly related to English proficiency. It is important to note that such differences existed only between the "well" and "very well" categories, signaling relatively minor variations in English knowledge. In agreement with the first hypothesis, length of U.S. residence has the strongest association with this dependent variable. Slightly over half of foreign-born children with fewer than 10 years in the country reported knowing English very well; this figure climbed to more than 80 percent among the native-born.

National origin also had a strong correlation with English ability. In this area, the large Cuban-origin group was divided into those attending Latin-oriented bilingual private schools in Miami and those attending

public schools. Differences between both groups on English knowledge were minimal. Over 70 percent of each category reported knowing English very well. Highest proficiency was associated with children of European and Asian origin, grouped in the "Other Nationalities" category, and with those of West Indian parentage.

The latter result was a natural consequence of the fact that most West Indian parents came from English-speaking countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Grenada, and the Bahamas. Second-generation Nicaraguans had the lowest English proficiency. This result was related to the relative recency of Nicaraguan migration. Very few of our Nicaraguan respondents were U.S.-born, and most had been in the country fewer than 10 years.

Associations with father's education, mother's education, and class self-identification were not significant by our criterion. But, in every case, the higher the parental position, the better the reported command of English. Though not supporting the hypothesis, they provided some indication of a tendency in the expected direction. More counterintuitive is the relationship with age since older children showed less proficiency. This pattern was attributable to the tendency of recently arrived immigrant youths to enter school at grades lower than the respective native-born age cohort. In this sample, older students generally came from non-English-speaking countries and were among the most recent arrivals. Nicaraguan children were heavily represented in this group.

However, the key story was the overwhelming dominance of English knowledge among children of immigrants and its strong positive association with length of residence in the United States. There was little variance in widespread fluency among the second generation, and whatever variance existed was highly responsive to the passage of time. A very different story emerged when we considered preservation of parental languages. As indicated above, foreign-language proficiency was measured in an identical manner to English knowledge.

One-third of the students in the sample were already English monolinguals. And, the absolute number of such cases (N=984) far exceeds the number of children of West Indian and other English-speaking nationalities, indicating a rapid loss of parental language among non-

English-speaking groups. Yet a comparable proportion of respondents reported knowing parental languages "very well."

Among the set of potential predictors, national origin had by far the strongest association with foreign-language fluency. There was a clear difference between Latin American nationalities, on the one hand, and Haitian, West Indian, and Asian/European nationalities, on the other. Reported English monolingualism among West Indian-origin students and respondents grouped in the "Other Nationalities" category was again a straightforward consequence of many of their parents being English speakers. The same was not the case, however, for Haitian-origin youths whose home language is French or Creole. Almost 70 percent of this group reported little or no knowledge of these parental languages, and only 12 percent declared themselves proficient in either.

The opposite was the case among Latin American groups where foreign language loss affected only about one-fourth of respondents and dropped to only 11 percent among Cuban students in private schools. Retention of the parental language (Spanish) was in part a consequence of the recency of some migrant flows such as Nicaraguans. More significantly, however, it reflected the presence of a large and diversified ethnic enclave where Spanish is the language of daily intercourse for all kinds of transactions.

Respondents in private bilingual schools were mostly the children of middle-class Cuban exiles who represent the core of this ethnic economy. It is not surprising that they have the lowest propensity to give up Spanish. Combined, these results indicated that Cuban and other Latin American-origin youth in south Florida are mostly bilingual. These results lend support to Hypotheses 1 and 2 insofar as they predict positive effects of immigrant concentration and a diversified ethnic economy on language preservation.

The originally Cuban and now pan-Latin enclave is located in Miami (Dade County). Hence, it is possible to predict that preservation of Spanish will be significantly greater among second generation youths in this city than in adjacent Fort Lauderdale where no similar phenomenon exists. This expectation is borne out by the results. Place of residence has the second strongest association with home language retention, with

Miami respondents being almost twice as likely to be bilinguals (reporting knowing the parental language "well" or "very well") as those living in Fort Lauderdale.

The very strong influence of ethnic concentration is counteracted, however, by the passage of time. There is clear evidence that the longer the child has resided in the United States, the stronger the tendency toward English monolingualism becomes. Among recent arrivals, 43 percent reported full command of a foreign language, a figure that falls to just one-fourth among the native born. This result again supports the first and second hypotheses' prediction of a significant negative effect of time on bilingualism.

Parental education, occupational status, and class self-identification had essentially no association with foreign-language fluency. This result supports Hypothesis 3, which attributes it to the contradictory effects of family status on linguistic adaptation. Interviews with a sample of immigrant parents of our respondents in Miami indicated that they are consistently in favor of English language acquisition, but not at the cost of giving up their mother tongue. Those with greater resources are in a better position to implement this bilingual project, but their efforts are frequently neutralized by greater exposure of their children to mainstream culture which the same resources make possible.

Overall, these findings are in close agreement with the theoretical argument outlined previously. Children of relatively isolated immigrants—such as those living in Broward County or Asians and Europeans groups in the "Other Nationality" category —experience a faster language transition toward monolingual English, whereas, children of relatively prosperous and highly concentrated immigrants, such as Cubans, are far more likely to retain their parental language. The passage of time significantly increases language proficiency and undermines bilingualism. Education and occupational status of immigrant parents, which could have reasonably been expected to have the opposite effect, fail to do so because of seemingly contradictory effects on linguistic adaptation.

A final variable of interest is the child's attitude toward speaking English versus speaking the parental or other foreign language. Just because children of immigrants know English well does not guarantee that

they will use it, given the choice. The evidence on this point is clear. Preference for English is overwhelming: 80 percent of the entire sample endorsed it. Length of U.S. residence is strongly and positively correlated with English preference, but even among the most recent arrivals more than 71 percent opted for English over their home languages.

National origin was also associated with language preference, but the trend here differed from those found previously. Children of Haitian and West Indian parents, as well as those grouped in the "Other Nationality" category, leaned strongly toward English in a fashion congruent with their weak retention of other languages. Cubans, however, also had a very strong preference for English, in particular those attending private schools. Despite their greater reported knowledge of Spanish, over 90 percent of Cuban-origin youths preferred communicating in English.

This result means that even among youths educated in bilingual schools at the core of an ethnic enclave, linguistic assimilation is proceeding with remarkable speed. Somewhat lower attachment to English was found among Nicaraguans and other Latin Americans, a probable consequence of their recency in the country, but even among these groups three-fourths endorsed their new country's language over native Spanish.

No other predictor had a significant association with this final dependent variable, although there was a clear tendency for children of better-educated and higher-status parents to prefer English. Again, however, these differences take place in the context of overwhelming language assimilation. An eloquent indicator of the trend was the absence of significant differences between students in Dade and Broward schools. This finding indicated that, whether second generation children live in an English-only environment or in one where use of Spanish is widespread, their ultimate preference for the language of the land will be the same.

The fact remains, English is alive and well in south Florida. Miami is the American city most heavily affected on a proportional basis by recent immigration and, hence, the one where the demise of English predicted by nativist organizations should be most evident. Our results indicate that such fears are exaggerated. Children of immigrants not only possess widespread competence in English, but also demonstrate an unambiguous preference for it in everyday communication.

Children raised in the core of the Spanish-speaking Miami community (those attending bilingual private schools) are actually the most enthusiastic in their preference for the language of the land. Moreover, the passage of time in the country strongly influences linguistic assimilation leading to a rapid shift toward English.

These results indicate that, contrary to nativist fears, what is at risk in this area is the preservation of some competence in the languages spoken by immigrant parents. Our results support those of prior research indicating that fluent bilingualism is an intellectual and cultural resource. In this sense, the rapid transition toward monolingualism represents a loss. Even highly educated immigrant parents do not stand much of a chance of transmitting their language to their children. Their illusions of communicating with their children and grandchildren in their native language will come to naught for the most part. Nativist fears that they will be able to do so to the detriment of English dominance are entirely unfounded. Results of the study indicate that only in places where immigrant groups concentrate and manage to sustain a diversified economic and cultural presence will their language survive past the first generation. In the absence of policies promoting bilingualism, even these enclaves will be engulfed, in all probability, in the course of two or three generations.

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Educating California's Immigrant Children

By Wayne A. Cornelius

One of the most significant challenges facing California today is educating a large, new, highly diverse wave of immigrant children, in resource-short public schools that are, in general, poorly prepared to understand and respond effectively to the special needs of such students, within a political and public opinion context that has become overtly hostile to immigrants and their offspring.

Until recently, the presence of large numbers of immigrant children (of whatever legal status) in the state's public school systems was a marginal element of the growing public debate over immigration in general. While the costs of providing public education to immigrant children represent, by far, the "big ticket" item in any overall estimate of the fiscal impacts of immigration in California, immigrant education was discussed only tangentially, in the context of the long-running controversy over bilingual education—the need for it, its goals ("cultural maintenance" versus rapid transitioning to all-English instruction), its efficacy in keeping immigrant children in school and improving their performance, and its cost to taxpayers. In recent years, however, the "immigrant invasion" of California public schools has gained greatly in political salience. How did this redefinition of a long-standing social phenomenon as one of California's major problems occur?

First, the proportion of immigrant children—whom officials usually classify at least initially as LEP (limited-English-proficient) students—in the state's total population of school-age children has been ris-

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ing rapidly since the 1970s, an inevitable consequence of depressed birth rates among the native-born population, coinciding with a great new wave of immigration, especially from Mexico and Central America, beginning in the late 1970s.[1]

According to the best available estimates, for at least half of Mexican immigrants entering the United States (legally and illegally) in the 1980s, California was the preferred destination (Cornelius, 1992). During that decade, the state's population of limited-English-proficient students grew by 150 percent, to 861,531, of whom more than 268,000 were immigrant students who had been in the United States for three years or less (McDonnell and Hill, 1993).

From 1990 to 1995, the state's LEP student population grew by more than 40 percent. California now enrolls some 45 percent of the nation's immigrant student population. More than one out of 10 school-age Californians are foreign-born, and over a third of the state's schoolchildren speak a language other than English at home.

The rapid growth of the state's immigrant child population during the past decade was fueled by the enactment of two major legalization ("amnesty") programs for illegal immigrants, as part of the 1986 U.S. Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). Perhaps more than any other single factor, the changes in migration patterns (especially in Mexican migration to the United States) brought about by the 1986 immigration law stimulated the growth of the immigrant student population in California.

IRCA made it possible for approximately 1.5 million long-term illegal immigrants in California to regularize their status. Imbued with a new sense of security and stability, newly legalized household heads sought to move their wives and children to California as quickly as possible, whether or not their dependents could qualify for the IRCA amnesty programs. The 1986 law thus encouraged permanent settlement of whole family units in California cities (see Cornelius, 1989b; 1992).

The large volume of IRCA-induced family reunification immigration from Mexico, beginning in 1988 and continuing strongly into the 1990s, was bound to swell the numbers of immigrant children in California public schools. A nationwide Current Population Survey con-

ducted by the U.S. Census Bureau found that, among Mexican nationals who had migrated to the United States between January 1990 and March 1994, 45 percent were women and children—more than double the proportion of women and children reflected in INS apprehension statistics during the 1980s.

Even more important than the growth of the immigrant student population in absolute terms or relative to native-born Californians, has been its high degree of concentration in a handful of counties and predominantly big-city school districts. In 1994, some 42 percent of all LEP students in California were attending schools in Los Angeles County alone. Moreover, within urban areas, immigrant children are clustered in inner-city school districts, a consequence of the low incomes of recent immigrant families and the extremely limited supply of low-cost housing available outside of the central cities.[2]

The spatial concentration of immigrant children strains the school districts where they enroll, in terms of financial resources, class size, and staffing with bilingual personnel. It also increases the immigrant students' visibility to the non-immigrant population and strengthens natives' objections to their presence. It is no coincidence that the epicenter of California's anti-immigrant movement of the 1990s is the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

Alejandro Portes has pointed out that overconcentration of immigrant students in inner-city schools can have another negative consequence: It brings the children of immigrants into sustained contact with U.S.-born minority students who have developed an adversarial subculture—one that denies the usefulness of education and discourages achievement in school.[3]

Apart from the size and distribution of California's burgeoning immigrant student population, there is considerable evidence that many children of immigrant origin are not performing well academically in the state's public schools. To be sure, conspicuous exceptions exist. Researchers have found that some immigrant children do amazingly well, considering the linguistic, economic, and family- and community-related handicaps under which they must perform in school. First-generation immigrants who obtain most of their education in the United States perform particu-

larly well.

Immigrant students of some ethnic and nationality groups (e.g., Vietnamese, Chinese, Koreans, Sikh immigrants from the Indian state of Punjab) achieve better academic performance than majority "Anglo" students, despite the widespread discrimination that they experienced and, in the case of the Vietnamese and Punjabi students, their families' poverty upon arrival in California.

Despite these success stories of "high-achieving" immigrants, dropout rates for the most numerically important segments of California's immigrant student population—particularly Mexico-origin and other Latino students—remain unacceptably high. In the Los Angeles Unified School District, for example, the dropout rate among Latino students hovers around 40 percent and has reached 73 percent in one large, immigrant-dominated high school.

Despite some commonalities, the reasons for poor academic performance and high dropout rates among children of immigrants vary considerably. But, for too many of these students in California today, there is clearly a problem of low educational attainment that could sharply limit their lifetime earnings and occupational mobility prospects.

The recent growth of the state's immigrant student population also represents a problem because of the public schools' diminished capacity to pay for bilingual education, English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, remedial education, psychological counseling, and other special services that some immigrant children need. The immigrant student population is expanding rapidly at a time when school budgets are not.

The federal government has chosen to treat the funding of immigrant education as a state and local responsibility. Only one specialized federal program exists to support immigrant education, and in recent years it has spent only about $42 per student. In 1992, Congress even chose to withhold $812 million in previously approved federal funding to help heavily impacted states and localities pay for education and health services for immigrants who were legalized under the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act.

While the federal government has essentially shifted the fiscal burden of providing immigrant services to the most heavily impacted states

and localities (Fix and Zimmermann, 1993), state spending on immigrant education varies dramatically. California spends far less per pupil for LEP students than most other key immigrant-receiving states. For example, in 1990 California provided $100 million to schools throughout the state that could be spent on programs for LEP students—$118 per student.[4] This compares with 1990 spending of $361 per LEP student in New York state and $1,581 per student in Florida.[5]

The acute shortage of bilingual teachers represents another major constraint on the public schools' ability to cope with rapid growth in the immigrant student population. As of 1995, California had fewer than 11,000 fully certified bilingual teachers—approximately one for every 112 LEP students in the state. The shortage of bilingual teachers is national in scope, but its effects are felt most acutely in California.

During the last 10 years, the number of bilingual teachers employed in the state increased by only 30 percent, while the population of LEP students grew by 150 percent. The result, in schools with large LEP enrollments, is a fundamental mismatch between students and teaching staff. As one Los Angeles district high school teacher put it, "We now have a majority or near-majority student body in which the primary language is Spanish. The teaching staff, in Los Angeles at least, is aging and is primarily non-Spanish speaking. So the demographics are all wrong."[6]

Another consequence of the current shortage of bilingual teachers is that instruction in the student's native language can be provided mainly at the elementary level, and only in the principal languages represented among a school's immigrant students. California's 14-year-old bilingual education policy, which requires school districts with large numbers of LEP students to teach those children primarily in their native language for at least several years, is the most stringent in the nation.[7]

It is obvious, however, that many California schools fall considerably short of full compliance. In the six California counties most affected by the latest wave of immigration, less than half of the LEP students at elementary and secondary levels receive any instruction in their native language. Slightly more than one-quarter of the LEP students in these counties have access to English as a Second Language classes (although the figure for Los Angeles is only 18 percent), and the remainder receive little or

no instruction that the state of California qualifies as bilingual education.[8]

Numerous school districts attempt to close the gap between the teacher supply and demand by using bilingual teachers' aides and teachers-in-training in the classroom to backstop fully certified teachers who lack foreign language skills. However, as the gap continues to widen, it is increasingly likely that an immigrant child arriving in California will be taught only by teachers who are monolingual English speakers, or who do not meet the state's stringent certification requirements for bilingual teachers, who must be able to teach the same subjects in both English and a foreign language.[9]

In California and other states heavily impacted by the most recent wave of immigration, "Scholarly and political debates over how long language-minority children should remain in bilingual classrooms or what instructional strategies should be used there are no more than hypothetical exercises, as long as bilingual-teacher shortages remain so acute" (McDonnell and Hill, 1993).

Unfortunately, immigrant children have been swept up in the generalized anti-immigrant hysteria and political demagoguery of California in the 1990s. Whipped up by prominent members of the state's political class, the electronic media, and a handful of highly vocal special-interest groups promoting greater restrictions on immigration, the latest in a succession of anti-immigrant movements so prominent in California history reached a fever pitch during the recession of 1990-93.[10]

One of the milestones in the politicization of immigrant education in California was the 1993 initiative of a little known State Assembly member from San Diego County, who dispatched one of his aides to videotape Mexican-origin children boarding school buses at stops just across the border, near the Mexican border town of Tecate—buses that would carry them to public schools in a U.S. school district adjacent to the international border.

That videotape, shown endlessly on local and national television, provoked a predictably angry public response.

It made little difference that many of the children depicted were actually U.S. citizens, born in the United States to Mexican immigrants. In most of these cases, the schoolchildren and their parents were living on the

Mexican side of the border because they could not afford housing on the California side. Whatever the circumstances, the children were not physical residents of the school district in which they were attending school—a violation of state law. The school district was promptly investigated by state officials and ordered to expel several hundred children who could not prove physical residency within the district.

A considerably more important milestone was the successful effort to secure voter approval of ballot Proposition 187 in the November 1994 state election, coupled with the decision of Gov. Pete Wilson to make his support for Proposition 187 the centerpiece of his campaign for reelection.[11] Proposition 187—touted by its advocates as the "Save Our State" (SOS) initiative—was approved by 59 percent of California voters, winning among all significant demographic, ethnic, and racial groups except Latinos.

Had it survived court tests of its constitutionality, Proposition 187 would have made illegal immigrant children ineligible to attend public schools and would have compelled the schools to report such children and their parents to state and federal authorities, if school officials had *reasonably suspected* that a student is in the United States illegally.[12] Proponents of the measure argued, without corroborating evidence, that it would deter further illegal immigration and cause illegals already living in California with their children to "self-deport" themselves en masse.[13]

Thus in the 1990s, the need to educate immigrant children—which U.S. public schools had been doing on a large scale since the first decade of this century—came to be seen as an intolerable burden on the state of California, along with the provision of health care and all other kinds of social services that immigrants or their children may use. Beginning in 1992 the Governor's Office of Finance issued a series of highly publicized reports in which California's newest immigrants were classified as "tax receivers" (whom the state can no longer afford to subsidize), as contrasted with "taxpayers."

This categorization conveniently ignores the income, Social Security, and sales taxes that most immigrants—legals as well as illegals—pay to the state and federal treasuries, as well as the property taxes paid by the growing number of immigrant homeowners (Fix and Passel, 1994).

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Such rhetoric helped to strengthen the angry, zero-sum mentality that was already being fed by the recession of the 1990s and job insecurity caused by massive structural changes in the state's economy (e.g., post-Cold War downsizing of California's defense-related industries). The comfortable margin of victory for Proposition 187 suggests that many native-born Californians had been persuaded that they or their children were being deprived of high-quality public services because of the money being spent to educate and provide other social services to immigrants "not entitled" to receive them.

Given this climate of opinion, it was a natural progression to move from steps to reduce immigrants' access to basic human services (Proposition 187) to renewed attacks on bilingual education and other programs seen as benefiting immigrants and other minorities, and to attempt to create a more exclusionary concept of U.S. citizenship. In July 1995, at Gov. Wilson's insistence, the Regents of the University of California voted to end a 30-year-old policy of giving preference to the state's Latino and African-American minorities in student admissions. Borrowing his terminology from a tract by historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., that makes much of the cultural threat allegedly posed by uncontrolled Third World immigration (Schlesinger, 1992), the governor successfully argued that such preferences threatened to infect California and the nation with "the deadly virus of tribalism."

In the U.S. Congress, the new Republican majority, inspired by a member representing a San Diego County district, has committed itself to the goal of stripping "citizen children" (the term used by immigration authorities to denote the U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants) of their U.S. citizenship. This could be done either by constitutional amendment or, less plausibly, through legislation that would "reinterpret" the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution.[14]

The rationale offered by proponents of this drastic change is to reduce government outlays—particularly Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC—for benefits for which "citizen children" are eligible, although their undocumented parents are not (Cleeland and Young, 1995). There is also growing enthusiasm in Congress for denying federally funded health and other benefits to legal immigrants and refugees.

Thus the political groundwork has been laid for a wholesale rollback of immigrants' human, labor, and civil rights, with the state of California leading the way. Immigrant children seem to have been specially targeted for punitive treatment—unquestionably, the negative consequences of the actions already taken or being contemplated by officials at the state and federal levels will fall most heavily upon them. In the long term, the costs will be borne by California society as a whole.

If the challenge of educating the current and subsequent generations of immigrant children is to be met, in ways that will benefit California as a whole as well as immigrant families, it must be reconceptualized as a problem of human capital development. Californians whose lifetime earnings and chances for upward mobility have been stunted by an inappropriate, poor-quality, or prematurely truncated education will lack the capacity to contribute as much as they might have to the state's economic development and to its tax base.

Indeed, limited formal education and rudimentary job skills set up a self-fulfilling prophecy: Such human capital deficits obviously increase the likelihood that the children of immigrants will end up contributing less to government revenues than they take out, through welfare and other financial assistance programs, as today's new immigrants are widely suspected of doing already.

The California economy suffers from a steadily shrinking manufacturing base, while predominantly low-skill, low-wage employment in the service and retail sectors continues to expand. If the state is to have a labor force sufficiently skilled to enable it to compete effectively for the kinds of investments by national and transnational companies that will replenish the "good job" base and create the new, higher-technology industries on which future economic growth will be based, it can hardly afford to ignore the basic education and job training needs of such a large segment of its youngest residents.

Quite simply, today's immigrant children represent the workers and taxpayers of the future. But, how much acculturation or assimilation among immigrant-origin students is desirable or necessary for optimal performance in school? The answer is by no means straightforward, nor necessarily consistent with the general public's apparent preference for

"fast-track," complete assimilation. In 1981, a federal government commission on immigration policy reform expressed concern that "the generation of children born in the United States will perhaps be too eager to cast away their cultural inheritances" (Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy, 1981).

In light of more recent data, especially on generational differences in educational performance, the commission's warning seems prophetic. Researchers, like Alejandro Portes, advocate a strategy of well-paced, selective or additive acculturation (in which, for example, learning English does not mean unlearning the student's native language).[15] This may prove to be the best path for immigrant minorities in California today.

Considering the extreme diversity of the state's immigrant-origin student population, it is clear that no single model of policy reform or school restructuring will suffice. The perception of schooling found among many academically low-achieving students—as a treadmill having no real payoff, given the limited availability of "good job" opportunities—may be all too correct.

Certainly, the bleak post-high school job prospects of many immigrant and second-generation students are a key factor in the high dropout rates among these groups. A large body of educational research, done in many parts of the United States and in other countries around the world, shows that students' perceptions of the post-school opportunity structure are a crucial determinant of their and their parents' willingness to continue investing in education. More—and better—jobs for which students are appropriately trained must be a major part of the solution.

In the midst of the strongest anti-immigrant backlash since the 1920s, it may be difficult to get public policy makers to focus on the needs of immigrant children in public schools. Indeed, in "post-Proposition 187" California, the thrust of public debate is to reduce the immigrant population, by whatever means may be necessary, rather than to facilitate its integration and help it achieve income and occupational parity with native-born residents. Nevertheless, the number of immigrant children "at risk" in California public schools will continue to grow rapidly in the foreseeable future, whatever new immigration controls are imposed at the federal and state levels.

Short of mass roundups and deportations, the stock of undocumented immigrants—parents and their children—is not likely to be reduced, even by draconian punitive measures like those mandated by Proposition 187. Some painful adaptations may be necessary for immigrant families containing undocumented members, if Proposition 187 should ever be fully implemented.[16] But returning to the home country is a viable option for only a small minority of settled illegal immigrants, because their economic base has shifted completely to California; they have no assets and no employment prospects in their places of origin.

The profound economic crisis that erupted in Mexico in late 1994 inevitably will intensify pressures from new emigration from that overwhelmingly important source country, including whole-family migration. Even if California's other immigrant communities grow much more slowly, or not at all, the heavier flow from Mexico alone will be sufficient to cause continued rapid growth of the immigrant student population. And, even if legal immigration ceilings are sharply reduced, as recommended in 1995 by the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform and enthusiastically endorsed by the Clinton administration and most members of Congress, the state's stock of legal immigrants and refugees is already large enough to ensure robust growth of the school-age, immigrant-origin population well into the next century.

Other developments in state educational policy will also have long-term significance. The California State University system is moving toward elimination of its extensive remedial education programs for students admitted with deficits in basic academic skills. And, as noted above, the University of California system has been required to abandon the use of race and ethnicity as preferences for admission. If gaining access to higher education will be more difficult for the children of today's and tomorrow's immigrants, and if remedial courses will no longer be readily available to those who are admitted, these circumstances make it doubly important that immigrant-origin students be better prepared at the elementary and secondary school levels.

Achieving much higher levels of preparation will also require major new resources, not just (or even primarily) for programs aimed at the special needs of immigrant students, but to address the larger, systemic prob-

lems afflicting the big-city school districts—problems that would exist even in the absence of the current influx of immigrant students (McDonnell and Hill, 1993). It will also require greatly expanded adult education programs, especially those offering ESL classes, for which the demand vastly exceeds current capacity in all large cities where immigrants are clustered.

Basic literacy in English is an obvious prerequisite for adequate parental involvement in children's schooling, as well as for increasing family incomes to the level necessary to discourage children from dropping out of school for economic reasons. Studies of adult, undocumented Mexican immigrant workers have found that lack of English proficiency is among the most important obstacles to upward job mobility, and those lacking English competence incur a substantial wage penalty (Cornelius, 1989a; Tienda and Singer, 1995). This key limitation is overlooked in most discussions of immigrant children's educational problems.

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Endnotes

[1] This standard equation of the "immigrant children" population with the "LEP" student population is convenient but imprecise, because many of those designated as LEP are, in fact, native-born U.S. citizens rather than first-generation immigrants. Nationally, over one-third of the 14 million people (children and adults) who could be classified as LEP on the basis of 1990 census data were native-born (Fix and Passel, 1994).

[2] The phenomenon of overconcentration of recent immigrants in inner cities is not specific to California. The 1980 census revealed that 39.5 percent of children in households throughout the nation with at least one foreign-born parent lived in central city neighborhoods, compared with 17.4 percent of children in households with native-born parents (Portes, 1995).

[3] Alejandro Portes, *Segmented Assimilation Among New Immigrant Youth: A Conceptual Framework, from California's Immigrant Children: Theory, Research, and Implications for Educational Policy.* 1995. Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego.

[4] Not all of these funds were actually spent on LEP students, since there was no state requirement that the money be used in this way; it could also be spent on

other (non-immigrant) disadvantaged students.

[5] Calculated from data in McDonnell and Hill, 1993: table 2.1, pp. 39-40.

[6] George Woods, teacher, Venice High School, quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*, July 24, 1995.

[7] This policy derives from a state bilingual education law that expired in 1987. In recent years the Democratic-controlled state Legislature has passed two bills backed by pro-bilingual education groups, the purpose of which was to reinstate the basic provisions of the 1987 law, which emphasized instruction in the student's native language. Both bills were vetoed by Gov. Pete Wilson, who favors a shift to English-only instruction. However, the state bilingual education policy based on the expired law is still operative.

[8] Statistics for 1994, from the Bilingual Education Office, California Department of Education.

[9] For example, in a 1993 audit of the Los Angeles Unified School District's bilingual education programs, conducted by the state Department of Education, more than 75 percent of the schools surveyed lacked qualified staff. In a typical secondary school classroom full of LEP students, auditors found a monolingual English-speaking teacher, using English-language texts and lacking a bilingual aide to translate material into the students' native languages (Chavez, 1993).

[10] Such movements date back to the anti-Chinese movement of the 1880s, which was spearheaded by Californians. See Chan, 1991; Heizer and Almquist, 1971; Miller, 1969; Saxton, 1971. One of the best accounts of the anti-Mexican nativist movement of the 1920s in California and other parts of the U.S. Southwest is provided in Reisler, 1976.

[11] Wilson's strategy worked remarkably well. Attaching his candidacy firmly to the "Pro-187" campaign, Wilson was able to overcome a large deficit in early pre-election polls and win reelection by a substantial margin. Wilson's pollster has revealed that, according to the campaign's internal tracking polls, more than 90 percent of prospective voters knew Wilson's position on Proposition 187—a higher proportion than those who could identify Sacramento as the state capital (Sherwood, 1995).

[12] Ultimately, for the public education provision of Proposition 187 to be implemented, the U.S. Supreme Court would have to reverse the precedent that it set in 1982, in the case of *Plyer* v. *Doe*. In that 5-to-4 decision, the court declared that public school districts in Texas (and, by implication, all other states) were obligated by the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution to

provide tuition-free education to all children who are physical residents of the district, regardless of their immigration status. The proponents of Proposition 187 deliberately sought to provoke litigation that could lead the Supreme Court to reverse its decision in *Plyer* v. *Doe*.

[13] There is no evidence from studies of prospective Mexican migrants to the United States, returned migrants interviewed in their places of origin, nor detained illegal immigrants indicating that appreciable numbers of them have migrated or seek to migrate to California or other parts of the United States in order to take advantage of free or better-quality education, health care, or other social services. On the other hand, there is evidence from field research suggesting that the passage of Proposition 187 already has yielded some unintended, negative consequences (for example, encouraging further permanent settlement of Mexican immigrant families in California), while failing to deter more than a tiny fraction of prospective illegal entrants who seek employment or to join relatives already living in the state (see Cornelius, n.d.).

[14] The Fourteenth Amendment was enacted in 1868 to grant full citizenship to the children of former slaves. It declares as citizens "all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof." Pending legislation would exclude illegal immigrant parents from U.S. "jurisdiction," so that children born to them on U.S. soil would not automatically gain U.S. citizenship.

[15] Alejandro Portes, *Segmented Assimilation Among New Immigrant Youth: A Conceptual Framework, from California's Immigrant Children: Theory, Research, and Implications for Educational Policy*. 1995. Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego.

[16] It is entirely possible that the U.S. Supreme Court may uphold the constitutionality of most provisions of Proposition 187, but strike down the clause denying access to public education, thereby reaffirming its decision in the case of *Plyer* v. *Doe*. In that event, public schools would remain responsible for educating children who are physical residents of their districts, regardless of immigration status.

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Parents and Teachers Speak Out

Breaking the Bilingual Lobby's Stranglehold

By Sally Peterson

Until 1987 when I founded Learning English Advocates Drive (LEAD), I had no intention of becoming an advocate. By profession, I am a teacher. For 30 years, I have been in the classroom teaching young children. But six years ago, after years of watching non-English-speaking children struggle to learn English in a program that actually delays their entry into the mainstream, I decided to speak out. I had seen enough, and LEAD's success verifies that hundreds of teachers just like me also had seen enough.

Today, I am here to accuse advocates of native-language-based bilingual education of fraud. They will look you in the eye and tell you that children taught 80 percent of the day in Spanish will learn English. I tell you that they will not.

Advocates of long-term bilingual education will tell you theirs is the most successful method of helping language-minority children enter the educational mainstream. I tell you that, at best, bilingual education is no better than any other method. For most children, it is a whole lot worse. Instead of helping these children, it hinders them.

Advocates of bilingual education will tell you their main goal is to teach English to non-English-speaking children. But I tell you their primary purpose is to perpetuate a seriously flawed teaching method so that the bureaucracy that supports it can sustain itself. Their livelihoods depend on promoting the myth that children taught in one language—80 percent of it Spanish—will learn English. If these children ever do learn English, it takes years.

I challenge advocates of bilingual education to show us their cards. They have been gambling with the lives of mostly Hispanic children for 25 years. LEAD is calling their bluff. Let the advocates of bilingual education come forward and silence their critics once and for all. We want to know why only three of every 100 California high school graduates who go on to college are Hispanic. We want to know why the dropout rate among Hispanics before the 10th grade is 40 percent—the same as it was when the great bilingual education experiment began. By comparison, the dropout rate among blacks has dropped dramatically during the last 20 years. The major difference between the educational programs for blacks and Hispanics is bilingual education.

Native-language-based bilingual education is a human tragedy of national proportions. Thousands of promising young people in public schools are segregated for years by language. They fail to achieve their potential because they cannot compete in the educational mainstream. They become discouraged and quit.

Advocates of bilingual education claim that children need to be taught in their native language because of self-esteem. But there is no evidence that bilingual education has an impact on a student's self-worth. Why after 25 years can't its advocates silence their critics with overwhelming proof that native-language instruction works? They cannot, because the proof does not exist.

A main point to be made in this discussion is that native-language-based bilingual education is not about education at all. Some of its adherents are well-meaning, but basically we are not talking about a program that moves our poorest children into the English-speaking mainstream as rapidly as possible. Basically we are talking about politics, pure and simple—the politics of a powerful lobby that can sustain itself only so long as its group is alienated from the rest of our society. Children are the tragic, innocent pawns in this cynical game, and long-term bilingual education is a tool. This lobby, by screaming racism at anyone who dares question this teaching method, had managed to silence honest, open debate on this issue.

Yet evidence is mounting that Latino immigrants, like millions before them from all over the world, want to learn English and want their

children to learn English. The Latino National Political Survey recently found that more than 90 percent of Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, and Cuban Americans say people who live in the United States should learn English. A study by the Educational Testing Service for the U.S. Department of Education found that an overwhelming majority of Hispanic parents oppose teaching the child's native language if it means less time spent on English instruction.

Evidence is also mounting that those who claim to speak for Latino immigrants to this country don't really speak for them at all. The professional lobbyists on Capitol Hill, the National Association for Bilingual Education, administrators and bilingual teachers, and textbook publishers are all focused on perpetuating a single teaching method upon which their livelihoods depend.

Never before in the history of American education has such an army of advocates been so determined to see one program mandated by law, regardless of its failure to achieve results. Their political clout has muted criticism from those who know the program does not work, and the education establishment has turned a deaf ear to the experience of rank-and-file teachers. By perpetuating the myth that native-language-based bilingual education really works, federal and state education bureaucrats have caused more damage to immigrant children than to any other single group in this country.

As critics of this program, we are proposing another tack. Rather than allow an ethnic political lobby to lock the door of opportunity for millions of children, let's pick that lock with the tools education gives us, beginning with English language skills. Let's upgrade the quality of our nation's workforce so that businesses in this country don't have to spend millions of dollars teaching their employees to read and write English. Let's enable the young people from our poorest neighborhoods to earn their first paycheck for a job well done, to buy their first home, and to educate their own children.

We all know that success is the key to self-esteem, and in this country, success has never been defined as wasted potential. President Clinton himself said that we don't have a single person to waste. We don't have a single talent to lose. Language is the foundation upon which education is

built. In this country, if children are not competent in English, there is little chance they will succeed in other academic areas or in the workplace.

The long-term, native-language-based approach to teaching language doesn't even make sense. Do you really believe that a child taught 80 percent of the day in Spanish will learn English? Of course not. He will learn Spanish. Bilingual education programs teach a child math, science, and history in Spanish and music and physical education in English. When a child joins the mainstream, it's no wonder he or she has a hard time keeping up with classmates who've studied math, science, and history in English.

Language learning, like all learning, boils down to input versus output. To teach a language, you must give extensive input of the target language. The more time a teacher spends teaching English, the more English a child will learn. Bilingual education mandates Spanish input and allows the public to believe the output is English. It is a fraud. You do not learn to play tennis on the golf course, and you don't pay for violin lessons if you want to learn the trumpet.

The time has come to change this program. Twenty-five years is enough. The program that was promised to be a two-to-three year transitional approach has become instead a long-term, monolingual, Spanish-language development and maintenance program. And now, incredibly, instead of supporting reform, advocates of this seriously deficient teaching method are calling for more bilingual education. This is like opening the window to a cold breeze when the patient is dying of pneumonia. Common sense dictates that you don't solve a problem by duplicating the conditions that cause it.

Languages serve a practical purpose—communication. Spanish is a language of great beauty, but when you live in an English-speaking country like the United States, you cannot use it to communicate with as many people as you can in English. If a young person cannot communicate well, he may not get a job. He may not qualify for job training or college. His options are limited, and his opportunities are few. The high dropout rate among Hispanics and the fact that so few go on to college are red flags waving in the hot air of overblown rhetoric. These statistics indicate we need to take the advice of a recent presidential candidate. We need to look

under the hood and reform this program that is supposed to power Latino youth to success. And we must do it now.

Bilingual education needs a complete overhaul. After 30 years in the classroom and hands-on, day-to-day experience with these children, I suggest seven steps toward improvement:

First, parents must be provided with accurate information so that they may give informed consent. Parents must know exactly what program their children are getting into. Coercion and harassment of parents who want to remove their children from a certain approach must stop. And the process of removal must be simple and easy to accomplish.

Second, there should be a two-to three-year maximum funding for all bilingual education programs, as well as thorough, periodic reviews of the programs by persons with no vested interest in any one method.

Third, teachers should be polled as to the success and failures of the program.

Fourth, educators must welcome a variety of opinions, pro and con. Name-calling and finger-pointing in an attempt to stifle debate must be recognized as tactics of those who don't want in-depth, critical examinations of these programs. By all means, we must have flexibility. Teachers must be free to use the methods that work in their schools with their students. Mandating one program for language-minority children is a grievous mistake, and the children are paying the price.

Fifth, teachers should hold a valid credential to work with limited-English-proficient children. All teachers should prove competent in the English language. A teacher assigned to teach Spanish must have bilingual credentials. Aides should not replace classroom teachers; aides should provide support service only. Credentialing should include classes in culture and methodology as well as English language development. Teachers should be good English-speaking role models. A good teacher is a key factor in motivating students to achieve.

Sixth, end the per-child financial incentives paid to schools for children in bilingual education. The payment should come when the child masters English and joins the school's mainstream.

Finally, bilingual education classes in colleges should teach various options to students, not just long-term, native-language-based approach.

Students should be told that long-range programs have been found no more and no less effective than any other method. Teaching other methods is an intelligent approach that future teachers will appreciate, especially when they begin working with language-minority students.

One very important point to remember is this: Bilingual education advocates are working to limit—rather than enlarge—our choices in educating language-minority children. Not for one minute would we allow the Food and Drug Administration to tell us we could select only one headache remedy. Not for one minute would we allow the Department of Transportation to tell us we all had to buy a Ford. Yet, pressured by a powerful ethnic lobby, the Department of Education requires that 75 percent of all federal bilingual education funds be spent on long-term, native-language-based programs—regardless of the results or lack of them.

Years ago, when bilingual education was introduced, I thought it would work. I thought non-English-speaking children taught in their native language would be able to master English and retain their native language, as the program promised. Now I know better.

Children of recent immigrants tend to come from disadvantaged backgrounds. They need English-intensive instruction with native-language support. They need to feel part of the society in which they live, and they need to feel a sense of belonging in the schools they attend. What they do not need is to be segregated into separate classrooms because they speak Spanish.

A final point—and a very important one—is that the resources needed to meet the goals of long-term bilingual education do not exist. Children deserve to be taught by certified teachers, not teachers' aides. To mention just one example, California is currently short 14,000 bilingual education teachers. At the rate colleges are graduating them, it will take 50 years to staff bilingual education classes in California's public schools. It is not fair to children or parents to mandate a program for which resources do not exist.

Since I began speaking out against native-language-based bilingual education instruction, my life has changed radically. I have found myself the target of hate mail, late-night telephone calls, picketing, and name-calling. I have been slandered as a racist, my professionalism has been

challenged, and my motives have been questioned. Despite the 30 years I have spent teaching young children, I have been accused of ignoring their needs and not caring about their development.

In the beginning, I was hurt by these personal attacks on my character and professionalism. But I came to recognize these tactics for what they are—a diversionary strategy employed by people who cannot defend their issue on its merits. The bilingual education bureaucracy—the teachers, administrators, ethnic activists, and textbook producers—know they cannot point with pride to unqualified success of long-term, native-language-based instruction. The National Association for Bilingual Education has its lobbyists, its lawyers, and ethnic activists working on Capitol Hill, trying as hard as they can to keep Hispanics from joining the mainstream. But is that what Hispanics really want?

The recent Latino National Political Survey indicates that most Americans of Latin American origin would prefer that Hispanic activists take a hike. Huge majorities of Mexican Americans, Puerto Rican Americans, and Cuban Americans think that residents of the United States should learn English. Most Hispanic Americans speak English better than Spanish.

These studies are bad news for so-called ethnic spokesmen who are forever demanding more programs that teach in foreign languages. What best serves the interests of these activists is keeping their own group alienated from the rest of the mainstream, full of resentments. When immigrants learn the language and culture of their new country, when they move up the economic ladder by their own efforts, the constituency of ethnic separatists evaporates. No wonder they promote bilingual education! It's the biggest obstacle Latino children face in joining the American mainstream.

It's time to stop squandering millions of dollars and wasting the talents of thousands of children. The advocates of bilingual education have had 25 years to prove their case. They have not because they cannot.

We must keep the focus of this debate where it belongs: on the children. It is their future on the line. And for their sake, after 25 years, it is time to say: "Enough."

Parental Choice in Burbank, California

By Lila Ramirez

I am a member of the Burbank Human Relations Council (BHRC) in Burbank, California. The BHRC was founded in 1958 as a local community organization dedicated to promoting and defending civil rights. Since 1994 we have filed four official complaints with federal and state authorities against the Burbank Unified School District (BUSD). One of the complaints we filed, with which I was personally involved, dealt with the issue of bilingual education.

Several Latino parents initially approached us asking for help because they were upset about a midterm program change at the district's McKinley Elementary. The school implemented a bilingual education program for Latino children called the Eastman program. From now on, 80 percent of the children's day was to be spent entirely in Spanish.

This change was implemented without notifying parents until after the fact. Despite the protests of both parents and teachers, the school continued to implement the program and even bypassed their own Bilingual Advisory Committee. Although the midterm bilingual program change (only at McKinley school) specifically affected Latino students, their parents were intentionally excluded from at least nine meetings on the program. Teachers were ordered to refer questions and complaints to the district office and any Latino parent who dared to complain publicly was barred from school board meetings and denied their right to speak.

BHRC decided to file complaints on behalf of these parents and children with the California Department of Education and the federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR). It has become apparent to me that the BUSD feels that Latino parents should have no say over their children's

education, and unfortunately, OCR agrees with this view.

Latino parents in Burbank are upset because their children are being deprived of English instruction by McKinley's bilingual education program. They are upset because they are bypassed in key decisions about bilingual education, they are not provided with information that is available to others, and their requests are ignored. Latino parents in Burbank are also being denied waivers necessary to get their children out of bilingual programs in violation of state law. Many parents are also upset about the use of, and specific questions on, the district's home language survey, which is used to place children in bilingual classes.

Many Latino parents have difficulty understanding the complicated process of removing their child from bilingual classes, and it is deliberately not explained to them. Because of the complaints we filed, and the resulting visits from the state's Unit of Bilingual Compliance, BHRC is ignored at school council meetings, district offices, and PTA functions. We have even been denied access to the public library. Many parents are becoming afraid to speak out or complain for fear of being called "malcontents" or *"desagradecidos"* (ungrateful).

California state law guarantees the right of every parent to remove their child from bilingual programs. Unfortunately, the agencies responsible for enforcing the law are slow and mostly indifferent. BHRC, on the other hand, investigated every complaint. We met with parents at school, in their homes, and before and after school board meetings. We met with teachers and administrators, and we confirmed information with private education specialists, Los Angeles county bilingual education consultants, and others about the bilingual program change at McKinley.

Although District administrators told us to "do nothing" about parents' requests for assistance, we ignored them and reported parents' complaints formally to the superintendent and the school board on several occasions. We met with individual board members and submitted recommendations offering to assist in any way. Yet despite our concerns and the complaints of parents who were unlawfully excluded from meetings, the Burbank Board of Trustees ignored us.

Latino parents were expressly denied their right to speak before the school board on the issue of bilingual education. Parents told me that the

microphone was disconnected when they tried to speak at the school site council meeting and was even physically removed from one person's grasp. No public comment was allowed by order of the superintendent. At one encounter, the district bilingual coordinator suggested I was not brilliant or articulate enough because I "was not taught in Spanish," as I should have been. That was her honest opinion!

The Burbank Unified School District also decided to retaliate against BHRC by ending a very popular Holocaust program we ran for 16 years. Our program brought Holocaust survivors to classrooms to discuss their experiences. This action was prompted by a letter from BUSD's Attorney dated October 10, 1995. The letter accused BHRC of having a "hostile and litigious approach" against the district and went on to advise District Superintendent David Aponik to sever all ties with our organization. The District's attorney wrote that "The [BHRC] should be viewed as an adversary seeking to harm the [Burbank Unified School District]." Our local paper, *The Burbank Leader*, accused the school board of being "vindictive and small-minded in ousting a well-run community-based Holocaust program" in a January 24th editorial.

This is the way in which bilingual education works in Burbank. Until administrators and the education establishment start treating Latino parents with respect and start listening to them, we are unlikely to see any changes.

Bilingual Education Alternatives

By Patricia Whitelaw-Hill

I have never taught in a bilingual program. I am an English as a Second Language teacher. I've taught for 20 years at all levels of the spectrum, from kindergarten through university through adult education. If the goal of programs for language-minority students in the United States is to help them learn English in order to perform in American mainstream classrooms, then I firmly believe that English as a Second Language, or ESL as it is commonly known, is the most effective means to this end.

I will let others discuss the many drawbacks of native-language instruction. I want to talk about why a focus on teaching English is effective and how it works. I have seen it succeed with students from dozens of language and cultural backgrounds. I have never had a student who could not learn English. I have taught children who were extremely gifted and well prepared academically, and I have taught students who came from disadvantaged backgrounds. All were able to learn English. I have also had students with learning disabilities and some who were mildly mentally retarded. They were also able to become fluent in English and succeed academically to the best extent of their abilities.

There is a common misperception about bilingual education. This misconception says that in order to teach English it is necessary for the teacher to speak the native language of the students. Usually, when I tell people what I do, they ask, "How many languages do you speak and how can you know all of the languages of the students you're teaching?" The fact is that although I do speak several languages, I never use them in the classroom. My goal is to present English to my students so that they can

understand it and use it for their needs right from the beginning.

A trained ESL teacher knows how to build on basic language patterns and vocabulary by presenting new vocabulary and concepts within a familiar language context, and new contexts with familiar vocabulary and concepts. When I started teaching English, the emphasis was on grammar and pronunciation. Over the years, our understanding of how people learn and use languages has greatly increased, leading to an abundance of different techniques and materials now available to teachers.

There is a wide variety of program designs administrators can choose from; this means that programs can be tailored to a school's resources and its students' needs. (Options range from pull-out programs to structured immersion, in which students are placed in regular classrooms but are given special assistance.) One advantage for ESL programs is that they are generally more flexible in responding to students' different stages of language development. As students gain fluency, they can be integrated into mainstream classrooms.

For most people learning a new language, progress depends on two factors—motivation and exposure to the new language, which means having the opportunity to understand it and use it for real purposes. While adults are sometimes inspired to learn a new language purely for personal satisfaction, children tend to be purely pragmatic language learners. Their motivation comes from the practical purposes it serves and the enjoyment they feel in using it. The classroom provides a natural incentive to learn by doing as well as the opportunity for interaction with English-speaking peers—perhaps the most motivating interaction of all.

It's also important to remember that language is both a psychological cognitive and a physical function. Very few people are able to become fluent in another language without a lot of practice. I like to use the analogy of driving a car. There are no textbooks that teach you how to drive, and instruction sessions are helpful but inadequate preparation. To learn to drive, you must have time behind the wheel and enough practice to learn from experience. It is the same learning a language. Students need to have adequate practice and hone their comprehension and communication skills.

In ESL, we often refer to the negotiation of meaning as the trial-

and-error process whereby students discover what works and what doesn't work in effective communication. Peer interactions are particularly effective in this regard because students are highly motivated to work through the sometimes frustrating process of getting their point across. When students have the motivation to persevere, despite the frustration of not being able to communicate as effectively as they can in their first language, they gain a common understanding, confidence, and self-esteem from their achievement. ESL helps students through this process by providing structured interaction for practice and support tailored to the needs of the student's age, level of language development, and academic needs.

Age also is an important consideration in learning a foreign language. Although it's possible to learn a language at any age—I've had students in their 70s and 80s who were successful—in general, language learning occurs more rapidly with younger children. Very young children learn a second language naturally and benefit the most from exposure and peer interaction. At about the age of six, children can begin to handle some direct instruction geared to their particular developmental age.

In my experience, the ages of seven and eight are the optimal years for language learning. It's because children this age still can benefit from the natural learning strategies of younger children; at the same time, they're able to think more consciously about language as a separate entity, and they can begin to employ more conscious strategies for understanding and using it. Children in this age group still enjoy learning games and are less worried than other children about making mistakes. As students get older they become more self-conscious. While older children have more advanced intellectual strategies to help them learn, these kids can be very concerned about making mistakes and inhibited from using the language, which is precisely what they need to become fluent.

For these reasons, I believe it's best to begin teaching English to non-English-speaking students in the earliest grades. This means that most students can be fully integrated into mainstream classrooms well before the crucial high school years. Because of the importance of literacy skills in academic success, students need to achieve fluency well before high school. It's extremely important to develop these reading and writing skills from the earliest age possible.

Although bilingual-education supporters have always assumed that reading skills easily transfer from one language to another, in my experience, this is true only in certain limited cases. Being literate in one language means you have an understanding of what the reading process is about—an important first step. For different languages, however, different decoding strategies are employed. The vowel systems in Spanish and English are quite different, and this causes a lot of initial difficulty in reading for Spanish speakers.

Another example is Polish and other Slavic languages. The most efficient strategy when learning to read is first to look for the verb in a sentence. But, in English, sentence structure is generally dependent on word order. Different languages require different strategies for reading effectively. These strategies need to be taught and developed. It's naive to assume that if you can read in one language you can read well in another. It is also naive to assume that if you speak a language well you automatically will be a fluent reader in that language. Reading is essential, not only because reading skills are required in education and society, but also because reading is the foundation for learning to write well. It's difficult to be a good and effective writer without first becoming a fluent and extensive reader.

Writing skills also take years to develop, and rhetorical organization among different languages varies widely. Different cultures have different rhetorical patterns. What may be an effective way to organize written communication in one language does not necessarily translate directly into another. To be effective in English expository writing, one needs to be direct and linear. In contrast, Oriental languages tend to be quite oblique and circumnavigate the main points, never stating them directly. This can be completely confusing to the English reader when translating directly. Arabic follows different lines of thought along parallel tracks. Spanish is similarly linear to English, but digressions are encouraged as evidence of fully considered thought and a good writing style. In English, digressions in writing are considered illogical and distracting.

It's not enough to assume that these skills can merely transfer from one language to another. They need to be fully and consciously taught, developed, and practiced in English. Good reading and writing skills are es-

sential for higher education as well as the workplace. The explosion of communication technology has increased the need for literacy and written communication skills in all aspects of our daily life. Most colleges and universities are now offering remedial courses in these very skills. It's naive to believe that we can provide non-English-speaking students with these skills at a delayed pace and an inadequate level when we are failing even to provide them adequately to native English speakers.

ESL is successful. I've never had a student who could not learn English. I've had some students who were faster than others, but all students can be given the English skills they need to succeed in a mainstream classroom. Once there, they may need extra support. It's important that in all of our considerations of programs for these students, we keep track of each student's individual needs and level of development; and we must be committed to making them full participants in our classrooms.

Bilingual Education in the Classroom

By Suzanne Guerrero

I was born, reared, and went to school in California. My family is of Mexican origin on both sides. I've been a bilingual education teacher for more than 14 years and am quite familiar with this issue.

When I went through my teacher training, I was indoctrinated into believing that bilingual education was necessary for children of non-English-speaking backgrounds. Naturally, I continued in that belief at the beginning of my teaching career. However, after 14 years of teaching I have come to realize, through my own practical experience, that bilingual education is not working. It is impractical and does a great disservice to our students.

I do agree with the primary goal of bilingual education of my district—"to enable students to be successful contributing citizens in the 21st century"—but I do not agree with some of the methods used to achieve that goal, primarily, using a student's native language to teach him or her basic skills until he or she transitions into English.

In order for children to become proficient in English, they must be exposed to English as much as possible. This is especially true for the many students for whom school is the only place where they use English. Yet I am required by my district to teach those children who do not come from English-speaking families in their native language—Spanish in my case—until they formally transition into English. To do this, they must meet certain criteria, which includes passing a Spanish reading and writing test with a score of 80 percent or higher. It takes a long time to teach children to do that in English, let alone in two languages.

My duty, as a teacher, is to provide each child with an equal educational opportunity. That opportunity is provided by establishing a student's English proficiency as quickly as possible. I cannot find any justification in spending the amount of time that I am required to teaching Spanish, when I can be using that same time to teach English.

My district also requires that, whenever possible, a certain percentage of the students in bilingual classes be native English-speakers in order to serve as role models and integrate the class. However, even these students need remedial help and reinforcement in English. In California, we have children of many linguistic backgrounds. The only way all of these children can achieve an equal educational opportunity is though English. English unites all of us, regardless of what our primary language may be.

Another factor that affects the education of children in bilingual programs is time. We have to teach the basics—reading, writing, and math—as well as social studies, science, music, PE, art, and health. There is simply not enough time in a day to include all of this curriculum in one language, let alone two.

We have the additional factor of a large migrant population where I teach. Many of our Spanish-speaking families work in agriculture and have to follow the crops. These families' children travel with their parents, constantly moving from one place to another. This makes it even more imperative that they be taught English as quickly as possible.

Although my classroom is a designated bilingual class and I'm fully credentialed by the state of California as a bilingual teacher, I speak to my class in English almost all of the time. I have a responsibility to prepare my students for high school and college where they will have to take their courses in English. Employers are also demanding increased communications and computer literacy skills from prospective employees, all in English.

There is a way to teach children English so that they won't feel intimidated or threatened or out of place. My students know that I can speak Spanish and I will talk to them in Spanish if I see they're struggling to understand a concept. I use English for everything else.

I am currently working on reforming my district's bilingual master plan. Keeping students in native language programs for three, four, or even

six years is unthinkable to me. There is no reason to delay the acquisition of English. My goal is to change the criteria used to transition a child to English classes.

One could spend years teaching Spanish language arts before a student would be able to pass the district's criteria for transitioning to English. The way the system is set up now a child might never be able to transition simply because some students have a hard time meeting the district's standard on these tests. I would like to see a reduction of the time spent in native language instruction and an increase of English language development. It does a great disservice to our children to maintain them in native language instruction for years on end. It is, in fact, a form of oppression. It denies them an equal educational opportunity.

Bilingual education is not the answer to getting children to be proficient in English or to become constructive members of society. We need to be integrated, not separated. There is one language that unites us all, and it is English. As a teacher, I am doing my best to help my students become part of, and fully participate in, our America.

One Parent's Story

By Miguel Alvarado

I believe that trying to teach kids in both Spanish and English is not helping them learn anything.

The Spanish language is totally different from English. If you concentrate on teaching just one language, a child can learn better. English is the main language of this country, and the sooner kids learn it well the better off they will be. Children become totally confused trying to learn in two different languages, and the teacher can only cover half as much if each lesson has to be taught twice—once in English and again in Spanish.

Today, elementary schoolchildren do not know anything. Sometimes they can't even write their own names. Wait until after the sixth grade to teach another language. If parents want their kids to know their own culture, then these parents should get up and do something about it.

I had a problem with my own children. I have kids in kindergarten, first grade, third grade, and fourth grade. The one in third grade cannot write his own name. Trying to teach everything in two languages has slowed down my children's learning. Their minds are confused. The most important thing is to teach kids to be able to read, write, and spell in English. If everything is taught in just one language, they will learn all their other subjects better and faster.

I have my own personal experiences on this subject. I came from El Salvador, where teaching is left to the teacher, and my teachers only taught in Spanish. Classes in English began at the junior high school level, when the language is easier to comprehend. The disadvantage of learning English in my country was that there was no way to practice at home. Here, Spanish-speaking parents can provide all the Spanish practice needed at home.

Part of the reason for teaching in both languages is to help children who have just moved here, whose parents speak only Spanish, not get behind in other courses—math, social studies, and so on. But I think that this approach is wrong. These kids, more than anyone, need to have total English and nothing but English, or they will always be behind.

I want my kids to concentrate on learning to read and write in English. I don't want to confuse them or have their time wasted by having to learn their other subjects in two languages.

Appendix

Bushwick Parents Organization v. *Richard P. Mills, Commissioner of Education of the State of New York.*

In September of 1995, the Bushwick Parents Organization, representing 150 mostly Latino families from the Bushwick area of Brooklyn, filed suit against the state of New York. State law requires that children spend no more than three years in bilingual programs unless they receive a waiver from the Commissioner of Education. The waiver is supposed to be awarded on an individual basis and a child's placement in bilingual programs may not extend beyond six years.

The Bushwick parents complaint is based on the Commissioner routinely granting waivers to most language minority students without any showing of individualized need. He has also allowed children to remain in bilingual programs well beyond the six year limit imposed by state law. *Bushwick* v. *Mills* has been thrown out by New York State Supreme Court Justice Joseph P. Teresi and is currently on appeal.

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY

In the Matter of the Application of THE BUSHWICK PARENTS ORGANIZATION, Petitioner, -against- RICHARD P. MILLS, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, Respondent, FOR A JUDGMENT PURSUANT TO CPLR ARTICLE 78.	Index No. 5181-95 Teresi, J. AFFIDAVIT OF MARIA ESPINAL

STATE OF NEW YORK)
) ss.:
COUNTY OF KINGS)

MARIA ESPINAL, being sworn, states:

1. My son was in regular English classes in kindergarten, and then was in bilingual classes in first and second grades. He switched into the bilingual program because his father wanted him to learn both English and Spanish.

2. When my son was in third grade in the bilingual program, his teacher told me that he spoke neither English nor Spanish. He repeated third grade, this time in an all-English class. He is now learning well in the English third grade class.

3. When he was in the bilingual class, he did not learn either English or Spanish. He could not read in either language.

4. When I requested to switch him back into regular English classes this year, teachers and school officials repeatedly tried to pressure me into signing a form granting permission for him to be placed in Special Education classes. However, I refused to give my permission.

5. My son's English is now improving because after school he goes for special help in reading. This help is given all in English.

maria Espinal

Sworn to before me this
17th day of November, 1995

ALBERTA H. PIERCE
Commissioner of Deeds
City of New York No. 1-1498
Commission Expires May 1, 1996

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY

----------X

In the Matter of the Application of THE BUSHWICK PARENTS ORGANIZATION,

Petitioner,

-against-

RICHARD P. MILLS, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

Respondent,

FOR A JUDGMENT PURSUANT TO CPLR ARTICLE 78.

Index No. 5181-95

Teresi, J.

AFFIDAVIT OF MARIA CRUZ

----------X

MARIA CRUZ, being sworn, states:

1. My son is eleven years old, and is in sixth grade at I.S. 291 in Bushwick. He participated in a Head Start program in English but has been in the bilingual program for six years, since he was in kindergarten.

2. I have spoken with his teacher to try to switch him into regular English classes, and they want to switch him into Special Education.

3. My son is confused between English and Spanish. I am unhappy with what he has learned in the bilingual education program.

Maria Cruz

Sworn to before me this
8th day of November, 1995

Notary Public

ALBERTA H. PIERCE
Commissioner of Deeds
City of New York No. 1-1498
Commission Expires May 1, 1996

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY

----------X

In the Matter of the Application of THE BUSHWICK PARENTS ORGANIZATION,

Petitioner,

-against-

RICHARD P. MILLS, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

Respondent,

FOR A JUDGMENT PURSUANT TO CPLR ARTICLE 78.

Index No. 5181-95

Teresi, J.

AFFIDAVIT OF CARMEN QUINONES

----------X

CARMEN QUINONES, being sworn, states:

1. My son is in Ninth grade at Bushwick High School, and has been in bilingual education since he entered the school system. In the bilingual classes, the teacher speaks some English but the homework is entirely in Spanish.

2. The schools decide to keep him in bilingual classes based on a test that they administer every two years. They are supposed to administer the test every year, but instead they administer it every two years. My son is confused between Spanish and English. I have never been consulted about whether I wished to remove him from bilingual classes.

Sworn to before me
this 8th day of November, 1995

Carmen Quinones

Notary Public

ALEERTA H. PIERCE
Commissioner of Deeds
City of New York No. 1-1498
Commission Expires May 1, 1996

Center
for Equal Opportunity

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SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY

----------x

In the Matter of the Application of THE BUSHWICK PARENTS ORGANIZATION,

Petitioner,

-against-

RICHARD P. MILLS, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

Respondent,

FOR A JUDGMENT PURSUANT TO CPLR ARTICLE 78.

Index No. 5181-95

Teresi, J.

AFFIDAVIT OF EDWIN SELZER

----------x

STATE OF NEW YORK)
) SS.:
COUNTY OF QUEENS)

EDWIN SELZER, being sworn, states:

1. I was Assistant Principal, Supervision, Social Studies at Eastern District High School in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, for seventeen years. I retired from the New York City school system in August, 1991.

2. Williamsburg adjoins Bushwick, and indeed many of the middle schools from which Eastern District High School's students come also feed students into Bushwick High School. Our student population is very similar to that of Bushwick schools.

3. Eastern District High School has a large bilingual education program. By bilingual education, I refer to an educational program in which students are supposed to be taught all of their subjects in a combination of English and their "native" languages, with the goal of being mainstreamed into regular English-speaking classes after no more than three years in most cases, and the possibility of remaining in bilingual education programs for up to six years in individual circumstances. However, the bilingual program as practiced at Eastern District High School did not, as far as I could perceive, live up to the concept of eventually mainstreaming the students.

4. My responsibilities at Eastern District High School included supervising the Social Studies program for the ninth through twelfth grades. We employed between 17 and 23 teachers in our Social Studies department. Of these teachers, six taught in the bilingual program. Thus, approximately one-third of Eastern District High School's 2500 students were enrolled in bilingual education programs.

5. As part of my duties as Assistant Principal, I was required to observe Social Studies classes at the school. I observed that English was rarely used in the supposedly bilingual classes. The ninth grade classes were generally taught entirely in Spanish, and even by twelfth grade the classes were still conducted approximately 85% in Spanish, with written material and exams in Spanish as well.

6. I attempted many times to withdraw students from the bilingual education program when I thought that they no longer needed to be in all-Spanish classes. I wanted to mainstream students into regular English-speaking classes because students in the bilingual education program were not learning sufficient English. Students who remained in the bilingual education program were not being prepared to get jobs or to function in English-speaking society.

7. I was never once successful at withdrawing a student from a bilingual education program. In my experience, once a child was in a bilingual education program, he remained in such program and was never mainstreamed into regular English-speaking classes. Whenever I attempted to withdraw a child from the bilingual education program, the teachers and other school officials refused to do so. Even when students themselves asked to withdraw from the bilingual program, the Assistant Principal, Supervision, Foreign languages did not grant their request. I was also told by teachers under my supervision and by other people that when parents attempted to withdraw their children from the program, they could not do so.

8. I reviewed the grades and test scores of many students who were in the bilingual education program who could have functioned in the English-speaking classes, but who were never mainstreamed. Certainly by twelfth grade,

many of the students had developed schoolyard English and could converse in the vernacular. However, because they never received English instruction, they developed no grammar or written skills.

9. Even the Spanish skills of students in bilingual programs were poor -- many students graduating from Eastern District High School were illiterate in both English and Spanish.

10. The bilingual education program at Eastern District High School never professed to have as a goal the mainstreaming of children into English-language classes. Mainstreaming never occurred, and students remained in Spanish-language, "bilingual" classes throughout their stay at Eastern District High School.

Edwin Selzer

Edwin Selzer

Sworn to before me this
17th day of November, 1995.

Notary Public

KIERSTEN M. SKOG
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 01SK5039361
Qualified in New York County
Commission Expires March 13, 1997

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY

In the Matter of the Application of THE BUSHWICK PARENTS ORGANIZATION,	:	
Petitioner,	:	Index No. 5181-95
-against-	:	Teresi, J.
RICHARD P. MILLS, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,	:	AFFIDAVIT OF JUANA ZARZUELA
Respondent,	:	
FOR A JUDGMENT PURSUANT TO CPLR ARTICLE 78.	:	

JUANA ZARZUELA, being sworn, states:

1. My son is in third grade in a bilingual special education program. He has been in a bilingual program for five years, and has been in Special Education since April 1994. Until 1994 he was in P.S. 377, and since that time he has been in P.S. 274. Both of those schools are in Bushwick.

2. My son cannot read or write in English or in Spanish.

3. I have tried to take him out of bilingual classes, and into regular English classes.

4. Last year, when I requested that he be switched to an all-English program, the school refused, and told me that if my son is unable to learn in a program

combining Spanish and English, he will not be able to learn in an entirely English program.

5. My son is not tested to determine whether he should remain in bilingual classes, because he can neither read nor write.

6. I did not want my son to be placed in Special Education. When I asked the principal to switch him into regular classes, they put him in regular classes for one week, but then switched him back to Special Education.

Juana Izquierdo

Sworn to before me
this 8th day of November, 1995

Notary Public

ALBERTA H. PIERCE
Commissioner of Deeds
City of New York No. 1-1498
Commission Expires May 1, 1996

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY

In the Matter of the Application of THE BUSHWICK PARENTS ORGANIZATION, Petitioner, -against- RICHARD P. MILLS, COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, Respondent, FOR A JUDGMENT PURSUANT TO CPLR ARTICLE 78.	Index No. 5181-95 Teresi, J. AFFIDAVIT OF ADA JIMENEZ

ADA JIMENEZ, being sworn, states:

1. My grandson was in bilingual education from kindergarten through fifth grade at P.S. 377 in Bushwick. He is now in seventh grade, and cannot read in either English or Spanish. He took a placement exam in kindergarten which placed him in the bilingual program, but I do not know whether he has had any evaluative exams since then.

2. When he was in fifth grade, I contacted the school to request an evaluation. At that time, they wanted to put him in Special Education.

3. When he started the sixth grade, I told my daughter, his mother, that she should move out of the neighborhood so that he could participate in regular English classes and not be forced into Special Education.

4. I personally met one of his teachers in the bilingual program who did not speak any English. We and other people we know were pressured into keeping our children in bilingual education by school officials. We were told that because my grandson has a Spanish last name, he should remain in bilingual classes.

5. My grandson attended Head Start in English, and did not speak any Spanish at that time. However, when he reached kindergarten, the school decided to place him in the bilingual program. In fact, they left him back a year so he repeated kindergarten.

6. I am very frustrated with the failure of the bilingual education program to teach my grandson either English or Spanish.

7. After I began working with the Bushwick Parents Organization, my children's teachers mocked them for speaking out in favor of reforms in the bilingual education program.

Ada Jimenez

Sworn to before me
this 8th day of November, 1995

Notary Public

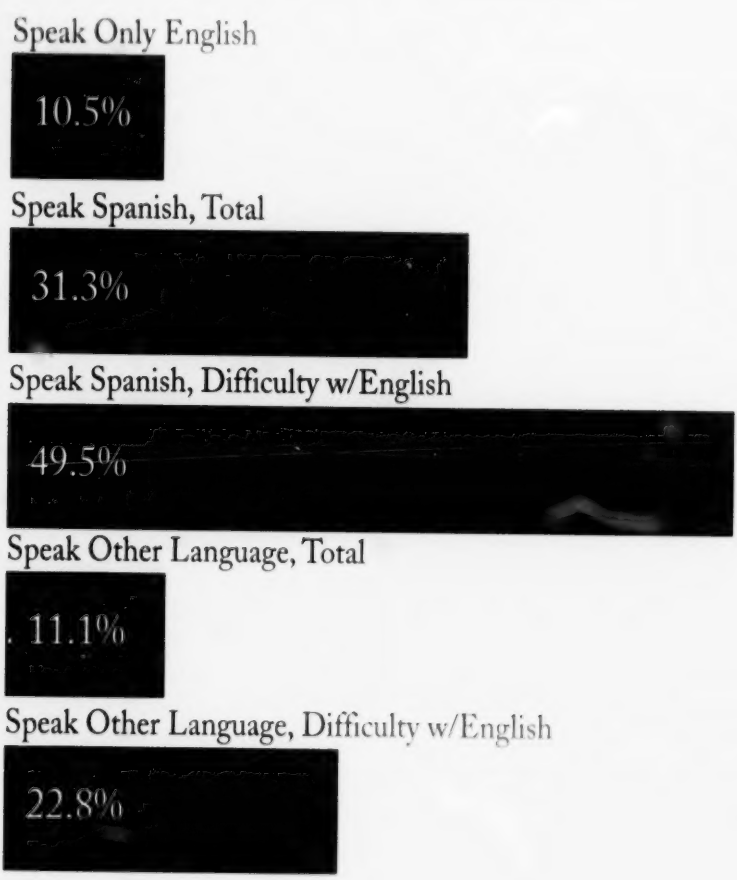
ALBERTA H. PIERCE
Commissioner of Deeds
City of New York No. 1-1498
Commission Expires May 1, 1996

Center
for Equal Opportunity

Index of Bilingual Education Statistics

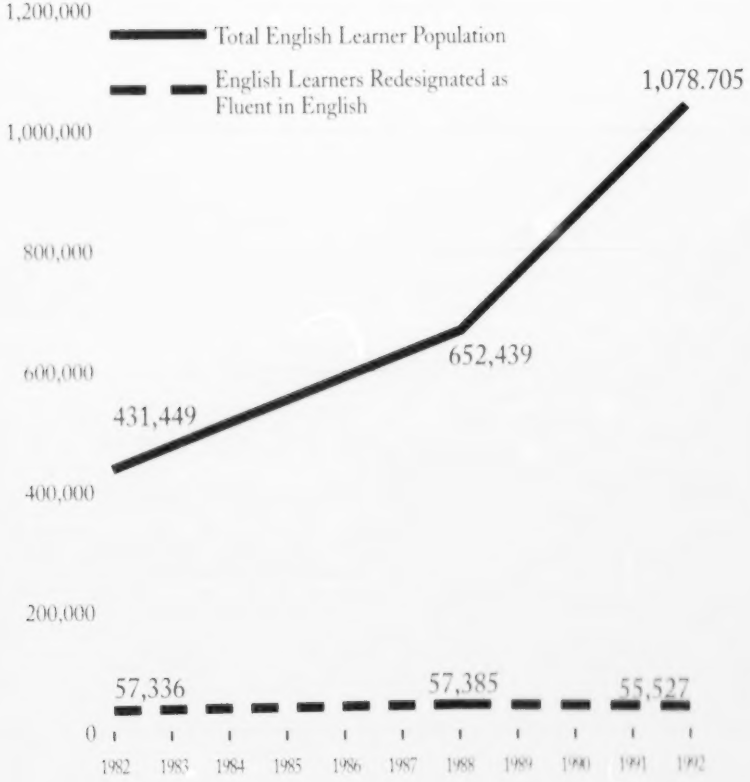
Compiled by Jorge Amselle

School Dropout Rates for 16-24 Year Olds (1989) By Language Characteristics



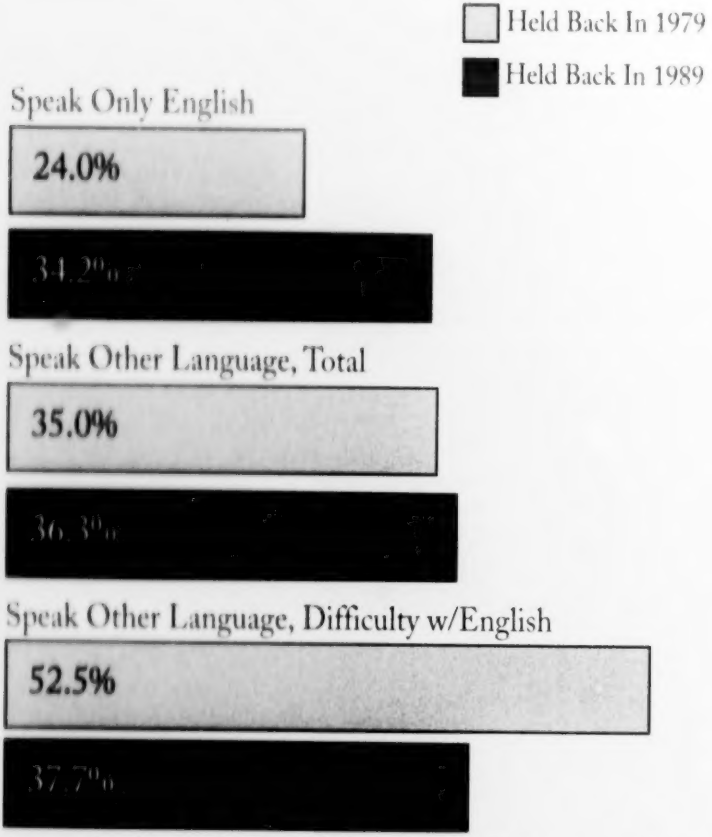
Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, November Current Population Survey, 1989.

California English Learner Population (1982-1992) By Designation



Source: Milton Marks Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy, July 7, 1993.

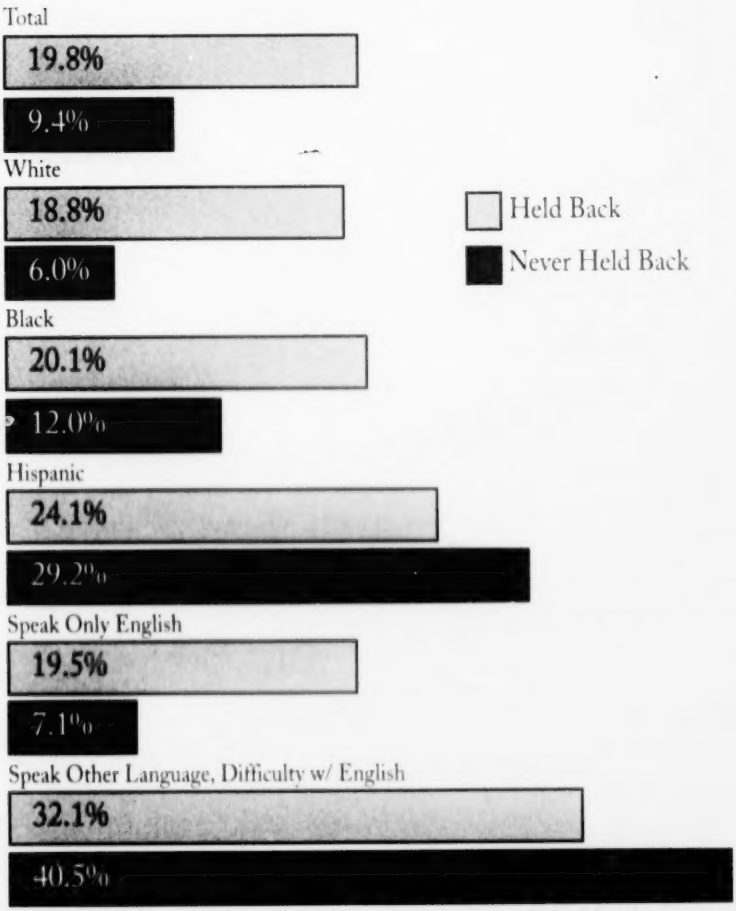
School Retention Rates for 8-15 Year Olds (1979-1989) By Language Characteristics



"Retention Rates" and "held back" both refer to students below grade level for their age.

Source: U.S. Dept of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, November Current Population Survey, 1979 and 1989

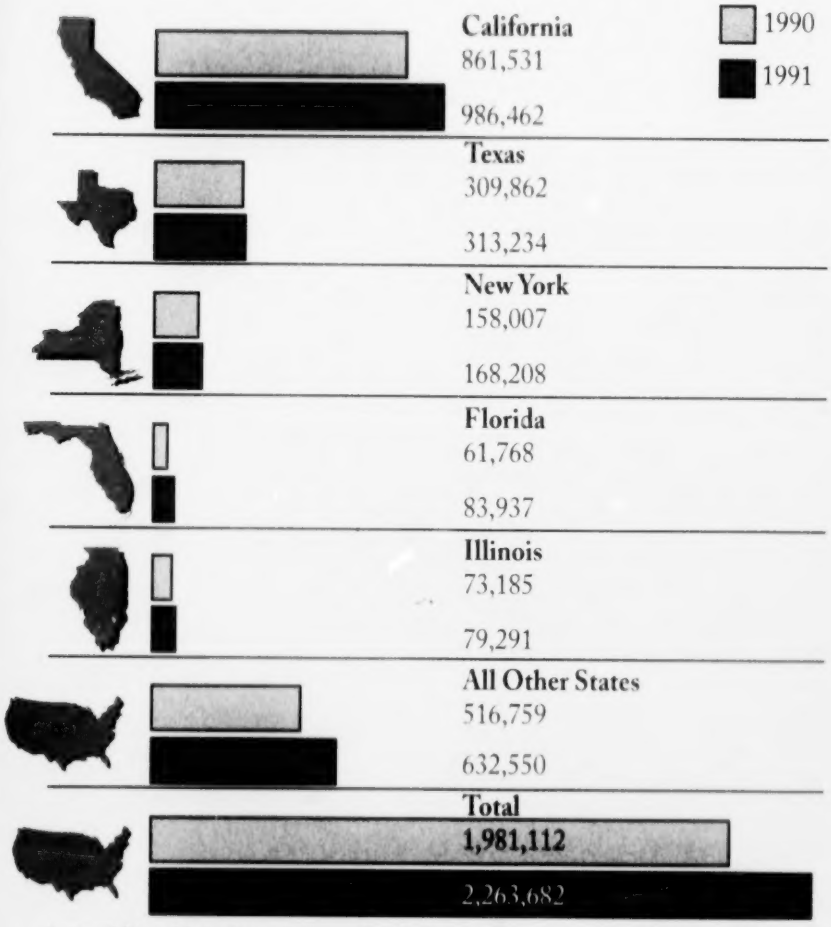
School Dropout Rates for 16-24 Year Olds (1992) By Retention and Background Characteristics



"Retention Rates" and "held back" both refer to students below grade level for their age.

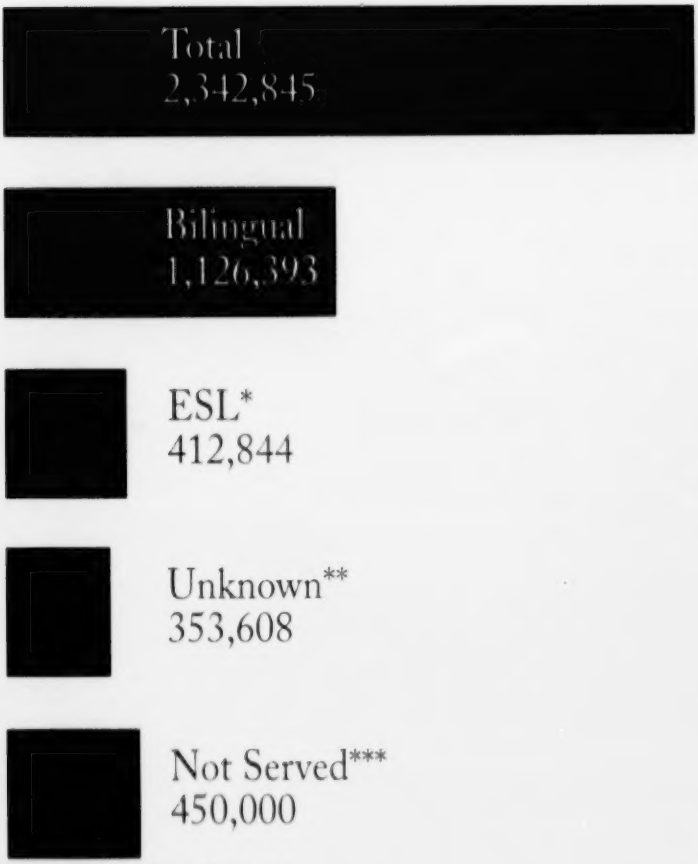
Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1992.

English Learner Population (1990-91) By State



Source: Milton Marks Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy, July 7, 1993

English Learner Population (School Year 1991-92) By Program



* English as a Second Language
** Students in English learner programs that may be bilingual, ESL, or other.
*** Limited-English-proficient students who are not in any English learner program.

Source: American Legislative Exchange Council, Report Card on American Education, 1994.

State and Local Expenditures on English Learners (School Year 1991-92) By Program*

Total
$9,926,913,251

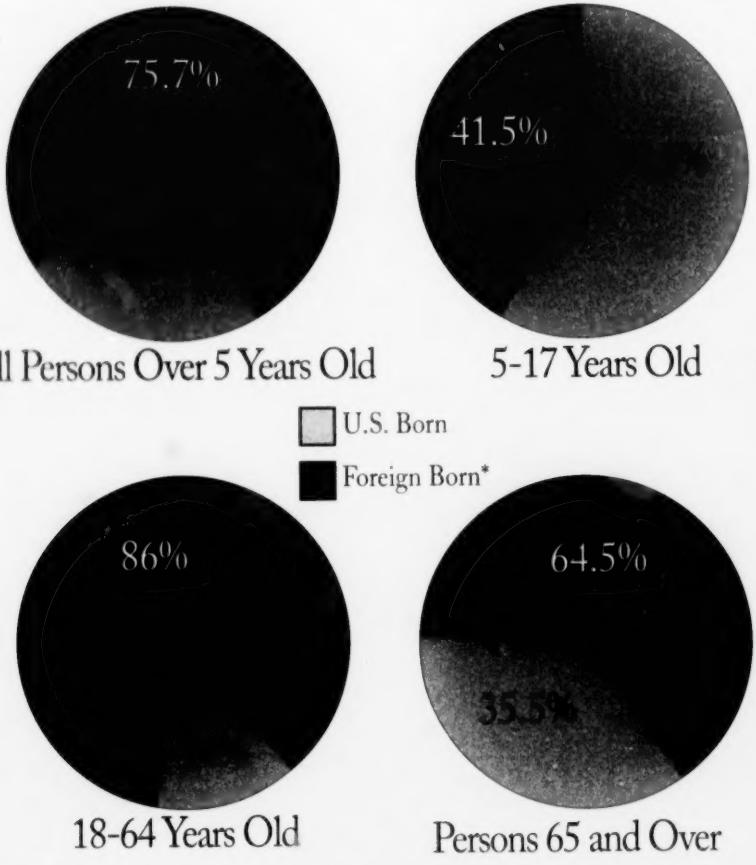
* With no reliable source of funding data across all of the school districts in the nation the following methodology was used to generate an approximation of costs by program type. The per-pupil expenditure in terms of average daily attendance for School Year 1991-92 was multiplied by the number of LEP students enrolled in each program type.

** English learner programs which may be bilingual, ESL, or other.

*** English as a Second Language

Source: American Legislative Exchange Council, Report Card on American Education, 1994.

Birthplace of Persons Who Have Difficulty with English and Speak Another Language (1989) By Age



Note: The numbers in some pies total more than 100% because of rounding

*Includes persons born in Puerto Rico and other U.S. outlying areas.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, November Current Population Survey, 1989.

Three-Year Exit Rates for LEP* Students in ESL or Bilingual Classes By Language.

Entered in Kindergarten, New York City

Students from different language backgrounds differed substantially in their enrollment in ESL-only as opposed to bilingual programs. Students with Spanish and, to some extent, Haitian Creole as their home language tended to receive bilingual services, whereas their peers in other language groups tended to receive ESL-only services.

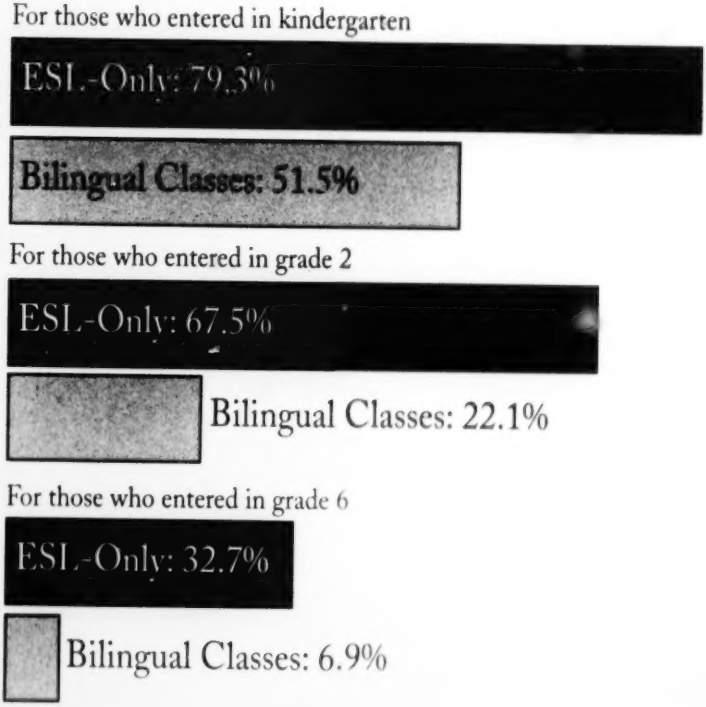
The three-year exit rates were lower for students entering at higher grade levels, but the difference among language groups were still observed.

* Limited English Proficiency

Source: New York City Board of Education, Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and ESL Programs: A Longitudinal Study, 1990-1994.

Three-Year Exit Rates for LEP* Students By Program.

New York City



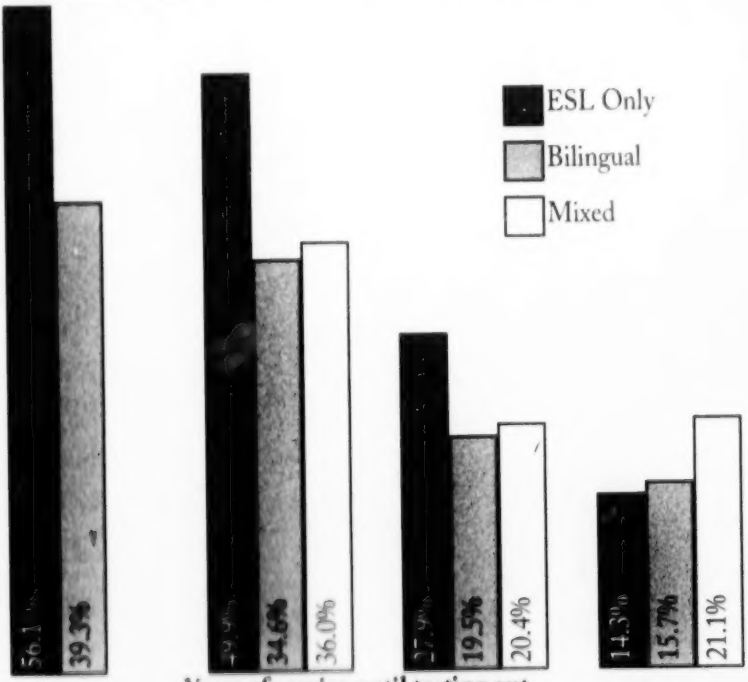
* Limited English Proficiency

Source: New York City Board of Education, Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and ESL Programs: A Longitudinal Study, 1990-1994.

1994 Reading Results of Students Who Are No Longer LEP.*

1990 Cohort. New York City

Percentage of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile



Years of service until testing out

	1			2			3			4**		
Number Tested	1,738	1,452	0	784	813	211	541	889	270	84	159	71
Number above the 50th percentile	975	575	0	391	281	76	151	173	55	12	25	15

* Limited English Proficiency

** Although these students tested out in the spring of 1994, they did receive either ESL-only or bilingual services during the 1993-94 school year.

Source: New York City Board of Education, Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and ESL Programs: A Longitudinal Study, 1990-1994.

Center for Equal Opportunity

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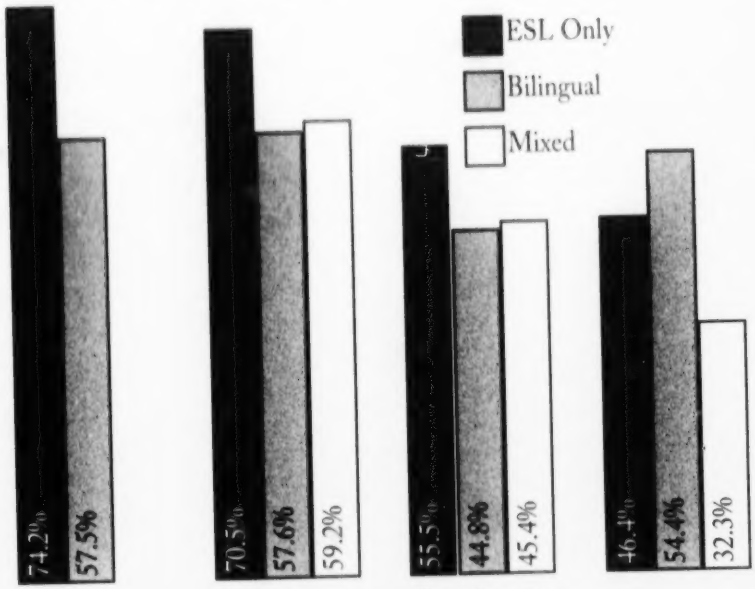
1994 Math Results of Students Who Are No Longer LEP.*

1990 Cohort. New York City

Percentage of students scoring at or above the 50th percentile



Years of service until testing out

	1			2			3			4**		
Number Tested	1,735	1,383	0	787	760	211	546	746	260	84	68	65
Number above the 50th percentile	1,288	801	0	555	438	125	303	334	118	39	37	21

* Limited English Proficiency
Does not include students who took translated versions.

** Although these students tested out in the spring of 1994, they did receive either ESL-only or bilingual services during the 1993-94 school year.

Source: New York City Board of Education, Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and ESL Programs: A Longitudinal Study, 1990-1994.

Contributors

Miguel Alvarado is a parent from North Hollywood, California with three children in the public school system.

Keith Baker is an independent social science research consultant. From 1979 to 1989, he worked in the main evaluation office of the U.S. Department of Education where he directed several extensive studies on bilingual education. He is co-author, with Christine Rossell of *Bilingual Education Reform in Massachusetts* (Pioneer Inst., 1996).

Linda Chavez is president of the Center for Equal Opportunity and author of *Out of The Barrio: Toward a New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation* (Basic Books, 1991). She writes a weekly column for *USA Today* and contributes frequently to the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, and *The New Republic*.

Wayne A. Cornelius is a professor of political science and Gildred Professor of U.S.-Mexican Relations at the University of California, San Diego. He is also director of Studies and Programs at the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies.

Irma N. Guadarrama is an associate professor of bilingual education at the university of Houston in Texas. She has a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Texas, Austin.

Suzanne Guerrero is a 14-year veteran bilingual education teacher in California.

Sally Peterson has been teaching English for 30 years in the Los Angeles schools and is founder and director of Learning English Advocates Drive (LEAD).

Rosalie Pedalino Porter is a consultant to school districts on pro-

gram development for English learners. She is also the author of *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education* (Basic Books, 1990) and director of the Research in English Acquisition and Development (READ) Institute.

Alejandro Portes is a professor of sociology and international relations at Johns Hopkins University. He is co-author, with Ruben Rumbaut, of *Immigrant America: A Portrait* (University of California Press, 1990). He is also co-author, with Alex Stepick, of *City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami* (University of California Press, 1993).

Lila Ramirez is a civil rights advocate with the Burbank Human Relations Council in California.

Christine Rossell is a professor of political science at Boston University. She is co-author, with Keith Baker, of *Bilingual Education Reform in Massachusetts.* (Pioneer Inst., 1996)

Rep. Toby Roth is a Republican member of Congress representing Wisconsin's 8th Congressional District. He is the sponsor of H.R.739, which would make English the official language of government and would eliminate federal funding and state mandates for bilingual education.

Richard Schauffler is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at Johns Hopkins University, currently on leave. He has conducted extensive field work on immigrant families in San Diego and Miami.

Patricia Whitelaw-Hill has worked as an English as a Second Language teacher for many years and served as executive director of the READ Institute in Washington, D.C.

Acknowledgments

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Wayne A. Cornelius' article is excerpted in part from his introduction to *California's Immigrant Children: Theory, Research, and Implications for Educational Policy*, published by the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at the University of California, San Diego, 1995, by permission. For a copy of this book, contact the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at (619) 534-4503.

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President, Center for Equal Opportunity

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Editor

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The Center for Equal Opportunity was started in 1995 as a project of the Equal Opportunity Foundation, a non-profit, tax exempt, 501c(3) organization. CEO is a non-partisan research institution studying the issues of race, ethnicity, and assimilation. This monograph is one of several issued by the Center.

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